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ISSUE #94
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Media with passion





DUAL IN THE CROWN

As you read this, Nintendo are introducing their next generation handheld system to the world. DS is the system that'll be front page news at this year's E3, knocking the vapourware of Xbox 2 and PS3 into the small ads 'round the back. **NGC**'s correspondents are journeying back from Los Angeles, with amazing stories of how DS handles, the innovations it brings and the games it plays – order the next DS-packed issue of **NGC** now.

This issue's just as exciting, as we're concentrating on some of the biggest Gamecube titles that are on show at E3 – and there are some major exclusives you're the first to see. We've devoted the entire front of the magazine to them. *Metroid Prime 2: Echoes, Need for Speed Underground 2, Paper Mario 2, GoldenEye 2*. Not every game ends with 2, we promise (there's *Resi 4* as well).

It doesn't stop there. We've also got a report on what you want to see Nintendo do with *Wind Waker 2*, sharp reviews of new GC and GBA releases, and some Germans drawing Pikachu. Really. Enjoy the issue – we did.

Team NGC
NGC@futurenet.co.uk



TURN TO PAGE 15
To begin your 31-page odyssey of future games…



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Go to page 112, where for a small amount of cash you can get three free issues and a free joypad. No excuses!



WHY WE'RE No.1 FOR NINTENDO

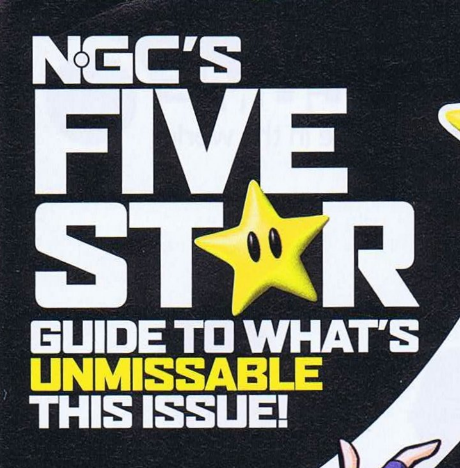
NGC's the result of over a decade of gaming genius – so you're the best-informed Nintendo gamer around.



■ First there was the SNES, and Super Play came out alongside it – fanboys rejoiced.

■ A new machine meant a new magazine – but one with the same high standards.

■ Now we've got Gamecube, and you've got **NGC**. Over a decade of Ninty love here…

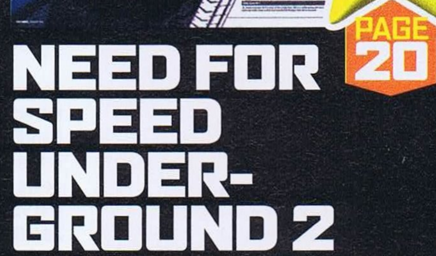


NGC'S FIVE STAR GUIDE TO WHAT'S UNMISSABLE THIS ISSUE!

1 PAPER MARIO 2

PAGE 22

FULL-FLAT FUN! You might think him shallow, but Mario's 2D form has plenty to do.



2 NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 2

PAGE 20

EXCLUSIVE Interview and shots!

PAGE 16

PAPER MARIO 2

HE'S LOST A DIMENSION, BUT ADDED NEW DEPTHS OF FUN!

MEET ENJIKI

While failing to see the point in Paper Mario 2 – "What's the point of flat artwork?" – our usually discerning mascot is very excited by the rest of the games we've got details on in this issue. Her friend Pinkjiki may prefer the ladylike action of a bra and panties wrestling match, but Enjiki would rather get out her Gamecube and have some fun with that…



WHAT'S IN NGC?

More fun than you'd think we could cram into one month!

PREVIEWS
Amazing new games – and a shedload of 'em too

NEWS
What's happening in Nintyland

EXTENDED PLAY
Getting more from your favourite games

REVIEWS
Ways to blow your hard-earned cash

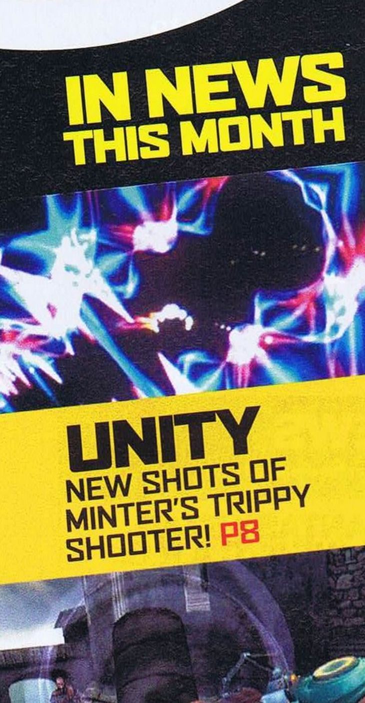
£5 OFF POKÉMON COLOSSEUM See page 13!



NGC BRINGING YOU NEWS FIRST

NEWSDESK

IN NEWS THIS MONTH



UNITY
NEW SHOTS OF MINTER'S TRIPPY SHOOTER! P8



'SPLITTERS RETURN!
FIRST SHOTS FROM FREE RADICAL'S FPS P8

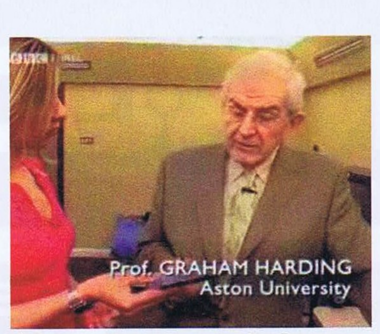


BANJO'S BACK!
NEW GAME FROM THE RARE BEAR P8

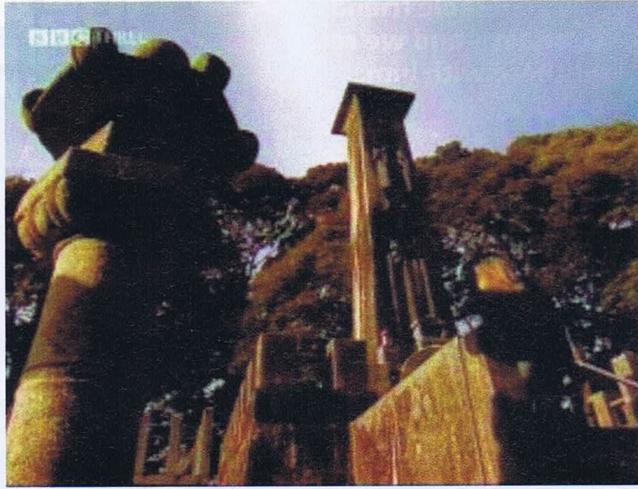
RAINBOW 6
FIRST SHOTS! OVER THERE... P7

PLUS!
- Lakitu's lens
- *Return of Big Q*

& MORE!



△ Harding tests videogames for dangerous flashes and patterns. *Mega Man X* fails.


△ Libby takes a look around Shigsy's old stomping ground...

MARIO KART "FAILS ITC STANDARDS"

IT MAY PROVOKE SEIZURES, REPORTS BBC DOCUMENTARY. NINTENDO RESPONDS...



Hands up who watched BBC Three's documentary, 'Outrageous Fortunes' in April? Judging by some of the angry letters we've had about it, a lot of you.

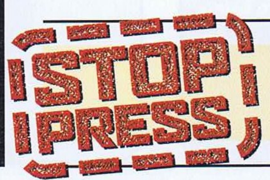
Presented by Libby Potter (of 'Celebdaq' fame) the hour long programme focused on Nintendo's history, the elusive ex-president Hiroshi Yamauchi and Nintendo's business activities and practices. suggested to many of you that the documentary was more an exercise in dirt-digging than an enlightening inside-look at our favourite videogames company.

In our opinion, it wasn't a bad documentary at all, at least in so far as it was interesting in places – the details about Yamauchi's past in particular proved good viewing. There's no escaping the fact though, that most of the 'interesting' stuff could already be

> **"ALLEGEDLY, NINTENDO KNOWINGLY SOLD GAMES THAT CAUSED SEIZURES..."**


△ This portion of *MK* fails ITC guidelines.

The European Commission's £90 million fine for price fixing, Nintendo of America's aggressive sales activity in the States – among others – were highlighted throughout the programme and found in far more detail in David Sheff's excellent book 'Game Over'. If you missed the documentary, we suggest you pick up a copy of that rather than wait for a repeat. However, the aspect of the



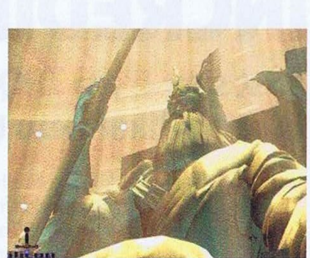
SECOND SIGHT
Last issue we told you that Free Radical's original third-person adventure Second Sight didn't have a publisher. Well now it has. Codemasters have picked it up and will be supporting the game with a £5 Million 'marketing blitz'. Hopefully it

KEEP FIT

Around five percent of people suffer from Photosensitive Epilepsy – a condition most common in children between the ages of six and twelve, with girls being the most susceptible of the sexes. This form of epilepsy is triggered by flickering lights and repetitive patterns.

If you're worried about this condition, there are a number of precautions that you can take. Avoid playing when tired (i.e. the early hours of the morning). Sit at least two and a half meters away from the screen, play in a well lit room and take frequent breaks while playing. Also, try to reduce the brightness of the screen so as to reduce the contrast between light and dark. Lastly, avoid playing on huge television sets…





△ The promising *Too Human* will never appear on GC now…

ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST



Er… well, actually, by 'one' we mean… 'two'. Two of Nintendo's best second party developers, in fact.

Both Factor 5 – the developers responsible for the *Star Wars: Rogue Squadron* series – and Silicon Knights, the talented team behind the superb *Eternal Darkness* and, more recently, *Metal Gear Solid: Twin Snakes* announced that they have broken their exclusive ties with Nintendo.

No official reason has been given for the split. Factor 5 have since confirmed they won't be releasing more games for Gamecube – focusing on 'other' platforms instead. GCNext?

Silicon Knights on the other hand have not ruled out producing any more games for Nintendo's current console. Likewise, Nintendo have 'left the door open to work on projects that meet the creative vision of both companies'.

Suffice to say then, that anyone who was looking forward to Factor 5's often rumoured *Pilotwings* or Silicon Knights' *Too Human* might have to wait for the next gen console.

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programme that courted the most controversy was the allegation that Nintendo knowingly sold videogames that caused seizures – and it was this which became the unfortunate focus of the latter half of 'Outrageous Fortunes'.

Television has a body called the ITC which has regulations regarding the acceptable levels of flashing lights and repetitive patterns. The videogame industry does not have these regulations.

'Outrageous Fortunes' claimed that many of Nintendo's games don't fall within the ITC's standards – making them dangerous, with *Mario Kart's* Daisy Cruiser being one specific example of this. Afterwards, a Nintendo spokeswoman said that the "notion that Nintendo would knowingly include material that could cause seizures is ridiculous".

We contacted Nintendo shortly afterwards about the link between their games and epilepsy in an attempt to get their side of the story.

"It is important to note," said the Nintendo spokesman, "that videogames do not *cause* epilepsy. A small percentage of the population has a pre-existing neurological tendency

> **"NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE HEALTH OF OUR PLAYERS"**

to have seizures triggered by exposure to flashing lights or patterns. Medical research indicates that such people can have seizures triggered by television programs, computer screens, videogames, DVDs, movie screens, Venetian blinds, strobe lights, striped clothing and escalators.

"Nintendo began including a warning about seizures with its videogame products in 1991.

"Nintendo was the first videogame company to provide such warnings.

"In the absence of established guidelines for videogames, Nintendo voluntarily prepared and implemented its own internal guidelines for game design and development in 1998.

"The use of these guidelines has led to a clear decrease in the incidence of seizures triggered by videogames in susceptible individuals as confirmed by medical literature and by a decrease in reported cases.

"Since nothing is more important to us than the health and well-being of our players, Nintendo will continue to keep abreast of the medical research in this area and will continue to apply that research to the design of its products.'

Perhaps the most frustrating aspect about 'Outrageous Fortunes' was its focus on Nintendo and the seizures – rather than just videogames in general. As a result it came across as though it was an issue specific to Nintendo, which is obviously completely untrue.

As ever, your comments on this subject are very welcome.

SHORT CUTS

MORE CLANCY ACTION

Ubi Soft have confirmed that their Gamecube version of *Rainbow Six 3* – a squad based counter-terrorist shooter that plays a little like *Conflict: Desert Storm* – will be out in June. The series has strong strategic elements along with Clancy's obsession for realism. The Rainbow Six games have always been highly acclaimed on other platforms, none more so than this third instalment. Unfortunately, that's mainly down to the game's online mode – which won't be present in the Gamecube version. Instead, Ubi Soft have promised a split-screen co-operative mode.

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won't go unnoticed then. And it's shaping up to be a great game as well.

NINTENDO NO.1
Well, in Japan at least. The company's pulling away from the competition as Japan's No.1 game producer – selling 6.5 million games from March 2003-March 2004. A figure that doesn't even take into account the Pokémon titles – as those specific titles are now listed under the 'Pokémon Company'.

LAST MINUTE RUMOUR!
Ubi Soft look set to bring Far Cry to Gamecube.

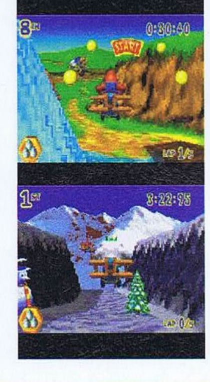
SHORT CUTS





BANJO TAKES TO THE SKIES

Anyone remember *Diddy Kong Pilot*? No? Hardly surprising as it was never released. Rare were working on it before they were bought by Microsoft and now it seems they've decided to reinvent the game on GBA using Banjo. Featuring three modes of play, Grand Prix, Jiggy Challenge and Time Trial, you'll pilot your plane against seven other racers through courses themed around *Banjo -Kazooie* levels. All your 'favourites' seem to have been included , like Mumbo Jumbo Gruntilda and Klungo. It's also abandoned its Mode7 looks for true-3D environments.



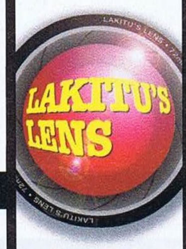
MEET THE INCREDIBLES

First shot from THQ's crime-busting Pixar hero tie-in.

It's going head-to-head with Shrek 2 to be the animated movie smash of the year, so it's only natural that The Incredibles should have a videogame tie-in. It's a third-person adventure, naturally, with interactive environments (you can smash stuff) and levels based on fighting and racing, among other things. Lovely. It's due for release in the autumn.



△ Bob Parr, aka Mr Incredible – retired superhero.



Seen Waluigi on the evening news? Pikachu somewhere he shouldn't be? Let us know...



WRITE TO LAKITU'S LENS, NGC, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW

Ali Butt from Somersham spotted Pikachu in a comic. Fine... But it wasn't a Pokémon product. It was Essential X-Men issue 106, which therefore means Nintendo's legal dogs will be unleashed and you, Mr Butt, will be responsible for the demise of your favourite comic.

Successful entries sent with picture evidence will win a GC game









△ **'Special' is the technical term for this sort of thing. We're sure it makes sense with a decent soundtrack...**

MORE UNITY

Is it a light synth? Is it a game? Maybe a bit of both?

Since we're faced with a lull in news outside of E3 (seeing as though the entire games industry's in the US right now), we'll take this opportunity to print some new screens from Jeff Minter's mouth-wateringly psychedelic shooter *Unity*, which is starting to resemble something close to a traditional videogame.

These pics reveal side-scrolling sections with cavern walls to avoid, like the classic *Scramble* coin-op. It's going to be brilliant, but with only one man writing the entire thing, we've no idea when it'll be finished...

TIMESPLITTERS 3

NGC GETS HOLD OF AN EXTREMELY EARLY VERSION – *SSSH*...



We've previously reported on the fact that Electronic Arts have picked up the rights to *TimeSplitters 3*, and while wandering around EA's offices in San Francisco this month we had the pleasure of bumping into *TimeSplitters: Future Perfect*, as it will now be known.

Admittedly, it seemed to be quite some way off completion but it proved promising, with a pleasing array of smart new features on display. The level we saw had a tally-ho sort of chap fighting his way up a heavily fortified hill in order to bust into a massive Scottish castle towering up above. Other levels we can reveal include a train level and a haunted mansion.

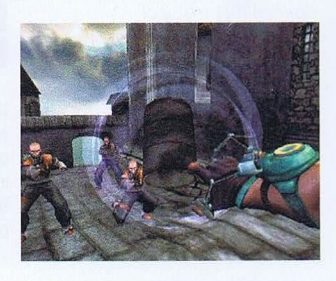
The game promises a stronger story mode this time around – one that concentrates on the history of the time crystals. Notable new additions are the ability to ride in – and drive – vehicles, plus improved 'rag-doll' physics and a smart new anti-gravity device that allows you to manipulate objects from a distance.

There will also be a vastly improved map-making feature with more options and a more intuitive interface. Excellent.









EA CONFIRM DS SUPPORT Although there's nothing in the way of detail. EA have finally confirmed that they will commit to creating software for the DS.

FIRST DS GAME ANNOUNCED No it's not Mario. Or Zelda. Nope, not even Sonic – it's a collection of old games like MahJong, Connect 4, Battleships, Backgammon and Chess – from Telegames the people who brought you (wait for it) Urban Yeti for GBA. Like us, you're probably finding it pretty hard to hide your excitement.

*Blork! Blork! Blork!

Q IS INNOVATIVE HARDWARE THE WAY FORWARD FOR ORIGINAL GAMES?

At the time of writing, Marcus and Paul are feverishly putting the finishing touches to the cover – "Look at all the twos!" – being the loudest and most memorable comment. "Don't we have *anything* that doesn't have a '2' stuck on the end of it?" "Not much," being the inevitable answer. "What about *Resi 4*? Or 2005?"

Sequels always come under scrutiny for their tendency to cash in and – through their general reluctance to innovate – to disappoint. It's an old argument and one that's been raging since the dawn of man. Buying into sequels is all part and parcel of knowing what you like. We like to feel safe every time we hand over forty quid for our next gaming fix. If we enjoyed episode one, then forking out more cash for the same experience is going to be a no-brainer. Yet we *still* moan about how little they've changed from their predecessors. We whinge about the slight graphical upgrade. We grumble about their lack of invention and we groan about how, at the end of the day, they're "not as good as the original". Alright, grandad...



△ ***Zelda: Four Swords*** **is the most recent example of innovations in hardware sparking creativity in game design. Its dual screen, multiplayer control has given birth to a genuinely exciting new way of playing a familiar feeling Zelda game.**

GAMEBOX STATION 2

This makes us wonder why people don't have the same attitude to *the consoles themselves*. When you buy a new machine you're buying into the same experience. Take it home. Plug it in. Stick the composites into the TV, your launch game into the system, and away you go. Sitting in front of the box, joypad in hand, just as you did way back with the NES. The basic, physical experience remains the same.

Earlier generations, particularly with the N64, had the benefit of revolutions in software and gameplay – but as the the next gen machines draw near, we can't help but feel that the difference in technology could ultimately offer a negligible difference in terms of play experience.

In a recent interview, Nintendo President Satoru Iwata summed up our feelings perfectly. "If the only thing the next generation consoles have is ten times processing power I don't think people will be able to tell them apart from this existing generation. In the end, if the consoles only represent more beefed-up technology, there will not be much of a future."

He's got a point. When we spend another £250+ on a new console, do we *really* just want a machine that can run *Madden 2006* with shinier helmets? No. Not really. Granted, more sophisticated visuals are a bonus – and yes, physics engines can really add to an experience, but it's not the huge leap we're really looking for.

Maybe it's time for consoles themselves to undergo a revolution. A machine that does for consoles, what *Mario 64* did for gaming.

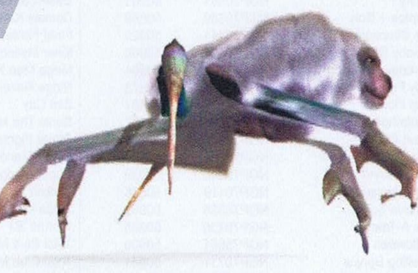
> **"GCNEXT WILL BE DIFFERENT FROM WHAT YOU HAVE SEEN FROM CONSOLES IN THE PAST"**

Nintendo, if Iwata is to be believed are already on it. "GCNext [GC's successor] will be different from what you have seen from consoles in the past. It's not about state-of-the-art technology for enhancing processing power, but entertaining people in a new way. To achieve this, new functionality must be added to our current technology."

If console manufacturers really want innovative games for their machines, they need innovative hardware to unlock the creativity of people producing games for them. Nintendo's DS and, hopefully GCNext, already show the company's eagerness to change the direction that consoles go from here.



△ **The Xbox2 'development tool' XNA. Sure it looks nice – but how is...**



△ **...it going to provide new and original gameplay thrills? Hmmm.**

PIKMIN KICKS ASS
Shigsy's Pikmin sequel, cunningly entitled Pikmin 2 and previewed over on page 28, seems to have done the business as far as Japanese gaming mags are concerned. The influential all-formats mag Famitsu gave it 36 out of 40, which is a pretty high mark, and Famitsu's Gamecube-only spin-off reckoned it was worth 39 out of 40, which is almost as high as you can get. Except for 40 out of 40, which is absolutely as high as their marking scale goes. Yes.



INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING

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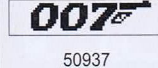
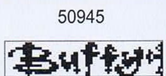
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Fifa Football 2004 Version 3	NGP 71680
Fifa Football 2004 Version 2	NGP 71643
Fifa Football 2004 Version 1	NGP 71641

PHONE ORDERS
0907 787 8669 - For Mono Tones, Logos and Picture Messages.
0906 406 2696 - For Polyphonic Tones and Real Sounds Only. (Calls 3 mins x £1.50 per minute)

LOGOS




namco 50874
QUAKE™ 50875
50877
loading... 50911
CARD ERROR 50913
KickASS 50919
007 50937
50945
Buffy 50946
50947
OFFSPRING 50955
GREENDAY 50956

JAVA GAMES



Nightmare Creatures™

Category: Beat'em All

Time to face your worst nightmare!

Phone Model	Game Code
Nokia 3100	NGGG 8594
Nokia 3300	NGGG 8291
Nokia 6100	NGGG 1569
Nokia 6610	NGGG 8821
Nokia 6800	NGGG 3801
Nokia 7210	NGGG 6958
Nokia 7250	NGGG 4522
Nokia 3510i	NGGG 4050
Nokia 5100	NGGG 8332



XIII

Category: Action / Shooter

Will you penetrate the mystery?

Phone Model	Game Code
Nokia 3100	NGGG 2431
Nokia 3300	NGGG 2112
Nokia 3510i	NGGG 2953
Nokia 3650	NGGG 2331
Nokia 5100	NGGG 3410
Nokia 6100	NGGG 4183
Nokia 6610	NGGG 8415
Nokia 7210	NGGG 4041
Nokia 7250	NGGG 9985
Nokia 7650	NGGG 3562
Nokia N-Gage	NGGG 4068
Sagem My V-65	NGGG 2948
Sharp GX-10	NGGG 6384
Sharp GX-20	NGGG 2009



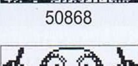
Planet Zero™

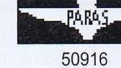
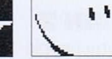
Category: Shoot

A handful of chaos!

Phone Model	Game Code
Nokia 3100	NGGG 9330
Mokia 3300	NGGG 2820
Nokia 3410	NGGG 1394
Nokia 3510i	NGGG 8103
Nokia 3650	NGGG 7466
Nokia 5100	NGGG 1158
Nokia 6100	NGGG 8833
Nokia 6610	NGGG 1935
Nokia 6800	NGGG 5811
Nokia 7210	NGGG 6954
Nokia 7250	NGGG 4109
Nokia 7650	NGGG 8999
Nokia N-Gage	NGGG 9220
Sharp GX10	NGGG 8813
Siemans M50	NGGG 7337
Siemans M55	NGGG 1341
Siemans S55	NGGG 6296

PICTURE MESSAGES



50868 50880 50881 50890
50904 50916 50930 50931
50936 50942 50949 50954

REAL SOUND TONES

Human Sounds	
Does your boss know you're her	NGP 75278
Dentist Drilling	NGP 75249
Suction Tube (Dentist)	NGP 75257
Check Your Mail Box You Moron	NGP 72927
Master I Have Mail For You	NGP 72935
Burp	NGP 79879
Long Fart	NGP 79880

Animal Sounds	
Chimp	NGP 79170
Dolphin	NGP 79172
Elephant	NGP 79174
Frog	NGP 79199
Monkey	NGP 79181
Pig Snort	NGP 79184
Wasp	NGP 79207
Lion Growl	NGP 79180

TO ORDER BY TEXT

To order a Mono Tone, Logo, Picture or Java Game:



Just text the code to **84600**. Once its delivered, Save it to your phone

To order a Real Sound Tone or Polyphonic Tone:




Text the code, followed by your phone manufacturer, to **84600**. Once its delivered, Save it to your phone

DISAGREE WITH MOST WANTED? Then email us at ngc@futurenet.co.uk or write to us at **NGC**, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW and tell us the three games you're most looking forward to. Every month, we'll tally up the scores on the doors and change the list accordingly.

MOST WANTED!

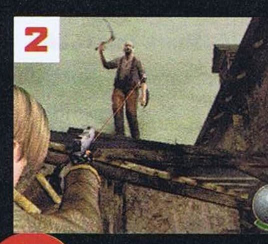
Adding up the scores and accounting for taste, that's what this page does.



1 NINTENDO DS

This is possibly the last time you'll see this **NGC**-modelled Nintendo DS. As you read this, Shigeru Miyamoto's probably pulling the first unit out of his jacket pocket and demoing DS to the world. How close will our impression be to the real thing? What games will be playing on it? How will the two screens interact? All these questions and more answered in the next DS Special issue.

UK	US	JAPAN
2004	2004	2004



2 RESIDENT EVIL 4

UK	US	JAPAN
2005	15 NOV	WINTER

"Trust your inner sense," Capcom tell us. "Blast the enemies in key hit zones." Okay. "Creatures that defy God's creation." Naturally. "Human or a group of crazed savages?" We bet it's the latter… Needless to say, it's looking *amazing*. Go see page 42.



! LEGEND OF ZELDA WIND WAKER 2

UK	US	JAPAN
TBC	TBC	TBC

Wind Waker 2's storming up your Most Wanted chart. We reckon Nintendo should take note of the changes you'd like to see in the sequel…

SEE PAGE 48



4 METROID PRIME 2: ECHOES

UK	US	JAPAN
TBC	TBC	TBC

A four-player split-screen Samus match-up, with each player tooled up to the teats with explosive weaponry and the ability to morph into a ball? Sounds like a party. And there ain't no party like a *Metroid Prime* party. No.



5 ZELDA FOUR SWORDS ADVENTURES

UK	US	JAPAN
TBC	7 JUN	OUT NOW

Unexpectedly brilliant, and a true showcase for the GBA-GC link. It looks fantastic, makes great use of the hardware and… we just love it.



6 PAPER MARIO 2

UK	US	JAPAN
TBC	11 NOV	31 DEC

The original N64 *Paper Mario* – sequel to *Super Mario RPG* – scored a heavyweight 90% in this very publication back in issue 53. *PM2* – or *Mario Story 2* as it'll be known in Japan – looks to be equally an absorbing RPG, with some gasp-worthy visuals.



7 VIEWTIFUL JOE 2

UK	US	JAPAN
TBC	XMAS	TBC

The first game in the 'VFX Action' genre was your 'Most Pleasant Surprise' and viewed as 'Most Original Concept' in the recent **NGC** Reader Awards. The sequel will introduce a new playable character, more 'unusual' environments and a new Replay VFX power.



8 WWE DAY OF RECKONING

UK	US	JAPAN
SEPT	SEPT	TBC

Wrestlemania is dead – long live *Day of Reckoning*. Enhanced presentation, animation and wrestler likenesses, Bra & Panties and School of Hard Knocks play modes, Momentum Shift – this all smells great.



9 GOLDENEYE 2

UK	US	JAPAN
XMAS	XMAS	TBC

If EA's *GoldenEye 2* development studio achieve their ambitions for the title, this is going to be great. Geraint's seen the game in action and got first-hand insight from the game's producer (see page 44), but can they really pull this off? All limbs crossed…



#	Game	Comment	UK	US	JAPAN
10	PIKMIN 2	Doing nicely in Japan…	TBC	2 AUG	OUT NOW
11	STARFOX 2	Hurry up Namco, eh? Get. It. Out.	TBC	TBC	TBC
12	MARIO TENNIS	The sport of toffs and Koopas.	TBC	TBC	TBC
13	KILLER 7	A gentle tale of lost love. Mmm.	2005	15 OCT	TBC
14	MARIO GOLF	Makes Boo Croquet look knob.	25 JUN	10 MAY	OUT NOW
15	SPLINTER CELL: PT	Should arrive in June/July. Yes.	TBC	TBC	TBC
16	DONKEY KONGA	Bongo-battering ape-tainment.	TBC	SEPT	OUT NOW
17	STARCRAFT: GHOST	Stealthily slipping two places.	TBC	TBC	TBC
18	CUSTOM ROBO	Hardcore robot snuff-'em-out.	TBC	OUT NOW	OUT NOW
19	SECOND SIGHT	See last issue – we did it big!	TBC	TBC	TBC
20	SPIDER-MAN 2	Peter Parker's best game yet?	9 JUL	28 JUN	TBC
21	DEF JAM VENDETTA 2	Better than you might imagine.	TBC	TBC	TBC
22	TIMESPLITTERS 3	Looks a bit better than 2.	2005	2005	TBC
23	MARIO VS DK (GBA)	The old rivalry returns.	TBC	24 MAY	TBC
24	TALES OF SYMPHONIA	Out this summer in the States.	TBC	13 JUL	OUT NOW
25	GEIST	The spooky shooter's sliiipiing.	TBC	TBC	TBC

WRITE TO… MOST WANTED/NGC/30 MONMOUTH STREET/BATH/BA1 2BW OR EMAIL NGC@FUTURENET.CO.UK

ULTRA RELEASE LIST

The latest on every Nintendo system game in development – updated monthly!

UK RELEASES

The most accurate listing available – although be aware that slippages can occur. All titles Gamecube unless otherwise stated.

MAY

28	Rayman 3 Player's Choice	Ubi Soft
TBC	Boktai (GBA)	Konami
TBC	Van Helsing (GBA)	Vivendi

JUNE

4	F-Zero: GP Legend (GBA)	Nintendo
4	Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban	EA
4	Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban (GBA)	EA
18	Shrek 2	Activision
18	Shrek 2 (GBA)	Activision
25	Asterix & Obelix XXL	Atari
25	Asterix & Obelix XXL (GBA)	Atari
25	Crash Bandicoot: Fusion (GBA)	Vivendi
25	Donkey Kong Country 2 (GBA)	Nintendo
25	Mario Golf: Toadstool Tour	Nintendo
25	Mario Golf: Advance Tour (GBA)	Nintendo
25	Rainbow Six 3	Ubi Soft
25	Sonic Advance 3 (GBA)	Sega/THQ
25	Spyro: Fusion (GBA)	Vivendi
TBC	Barbarian	Avalon
TBC	Barbarian (GBA)	Avalon
TBC	Goblin Commander: Unleash the Horde	Jaleco
TBC	Phantasy Star Online Episode III: C.A.R.D. Revolution	Sega
TBC	Robocop	Avalon
TBC	Robocop (GBA)	Avalon
TBC	Samurai Jack	Sega
TBC	World Championship Pool 2004	Jaleco

JULY

9	Spider-Man The Movie 2	Activision
9	Spider-Man The Movie 2 (GBA)	Activision
30	Catwoman	EA
30	Catwoman (GBA)	EA

SEPTEMBER

3	Mega Man Battle Network 4 (GBA)	Capcom
TBC	Starcraft: Ghost	Vivendi
TBC	WWE Day of Reckoning	THQ

OCTOBER

TBC	Shark Tale	Activision
TBC	Shark Tale (GBA)	Activision
TBC	Starsky & Hutch 2	Empire
TBC	X-Men Legends	Activision

AUTUMN 2004

Banjo Pilot (GBA)	THQ
Mega Man X Command Mission	Capcom
TY The Tasmanian Tiger 2	EA
TY The Tasmanian Tiger 2 (GBA)	EA

WINTER 2004

GoldenEye 2	EA
The Incredibles	THQ
The Incredibles (GBA)	THQ
The Lord of the Rings: The Third Age	EA
Need for Speed Underground 2	EA
Need for Speed Underground 2 (GBA)	EA
The URBZ: Sims in the City	EA
The URBZ: Sims in the City (GBA)	EA

TBC 2004

Animal Crossing 2	Nintendo
Baten Kaitos	Namco
Call of Duty: Finest Hour	Activision
Custom Robo	Nintendo
Custom Robo GX (GBA)	Nintendo
Def Jam Vendetta 2	EA
Donkey Konga	Nintendo
Extreme Force	Namco
Fantastic Four	Activision
Far Cry Instincts	Ubi Soft
FIFA 2005	EA
Fire Emblem (GBA)	Nintendo
Game Zero (working title)	Zoo
Geist	Nintendo
Good Cop Bad Cop	Revolution
Good Cop Bad Cop (GBA)	Revolution
Hamtaro: Rainbow Rescue (GBA)	Nintendo
Legend of Golfer	Nintendo
Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events	Activision
Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events (GBA)	Activision
Madden NFL 2005	EA
Mario Party 6	Nintendo
Mario Tennis	Nintendo
Mario Tennis (GBA)	Nintendo
Masters of the Universe He-Man: Defender of Grayskull	TDK/Take2
Metroid Prime 2: Echoes	Nintendo
Mario vs Donkey Kong (GBA)	Nintendo
Muppets Party Cruise	TDK/Take 2
NBA Live 2005	EA
NHL 2005	EA
Nightmare Creatures 3	Nintendo
Nintendo Puzzle Collection	Nintendo
Paper Mario 2	Nintendo
Pikmin 2	Nintendo
Prince of Persia 2	Ubi Soft
Scary Tales	Wanadoo
Second Sight	Free Radical
Shaman King	Konami
Space Raiders	Taito
Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow	Ubi Soft
Starfox 2	Nintendo
Super Collapse! II (GBA)	Majesco
Super Mario 128	Nintendo
Tak 2: The Staff of Dreams	THQ
Tak 2: The Staff of Dreams (GBA)	THQ
Tales of Symphonia	Namco
Terminator 3: The Redemption	Atari
Unity	Lionhead
Viewtiful Joe 2	Capcom
Virtua Fighter Cyber Generation	Sega
Wario Ware Inc.	Nintendo
Yu-Gi-Oh! Falsebound Kingdom	Konami
The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker 2	Nintendo
The Legend of Zelda: Four Swords Adventures	Nintendo

TBC 2005

The Godfather	EA
Killer 7	Capcom
Resident Evil 4	Capcom
The Movies	Activision
TimeSplitters 3	EA

NGC saves you money! Use this voucher to get Colosseum – it's out now!

US RELEASES

The most important US releases to import…





JUNE

1 **Road Trip: Arcade Edition** Conspiracy Entertainment
7 **Classic NES Series: Donkey Kong (GBA)** Nintendo
7 **Classic NES Series: Excitebike (GBA)** Nintendo
7 **Classic NES Series: Ice Climber (GBA)** Nintendo
7 **Classic NES Series: Super Mario Bros (GBA)** Nintendo
7 **The Legend of Zelda: Four Swords Adventures** Nintendo
28 **Mario Golf: Advance Tour (GBA)** Nintendo
28 **Spider-Man 2** Activision

JULY

13 **Tales of Symphonia** Namco
15 **Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow** Ubi Soft

AUGUST

2 **Madden NFL 2005** EA
2 **Metal Slug Advance (GBA)** SNK
2 **Pikmin 2** Nintendo

SEPTEMBER

TBC **Donkey Konga** Nintendo
TBC **WWE Day of Reckoning** THQ

OCTOBER

15 **Killer 7** Capcom

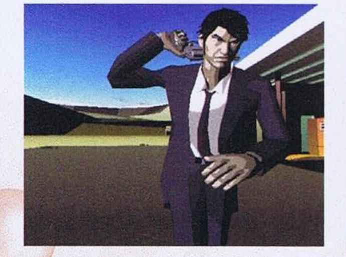
NOVEMBER

15 **Resident Evil 4** Capcom

JAP RELEASES

Big name Japanese future hits.





MAY

27 **Wario World** Nintendo

JUNE

17 **Sonic Advance 3 (GBA)** Sega
26 **Harry Potter to Azkaban no Shuujin** EA

JULY

8 **Crash Bandicoot Bakusou! Nitro Kart** Konami
8 **Korokke! Ban-Ou no Kiki Sukue** Konami
15 **Jikkyou Powerful Pro Yakyuu 11** Konami

WINTER 2004

BioHazard 4 Capcom
Killer 7 Capcom

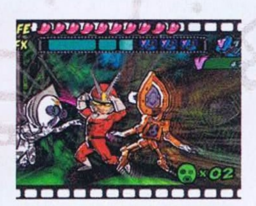
TBC 2004

Mario vs Donkey Kong (GBA) Nintendo
Mario Party 6 Nintendo
Mario Tennis Nintendo
Metroid Prime 2 Nintendo
Paper Mario 2 Nintendo
Starfox 2 Nintendo/Namco
Viewtiful Joe 2 Capcom
Virtua Fighter Cyber Generation: Judgement
Six No Yabou Sega

E3/04 SPECIAL







Your essential guide to the biggest games show on Earth. Part one.

If you've been reading **NGC** for a few years, you'll understand why we get so excited about E3. The Electronics Entertainment Expo is an industry-only event which takes place every summer in the US, usually Los Angeles. It fills four-or-so days, two cavernous halls and beyond with the sights, sounds and smells of cutting-edge videogames, behind-closed-doors presentations and – you knew it was coming – inhumanly obese, freebie-hungry American fanboys. We love them!

This year, things are mind-blowingly exciting. Shigsy and Satoru Iwata will be revealing DS to the whooping, hollering, "Sh*t, yeah!"-ing US crowds (while we Brits simply wink approvingly at Nintendo's elders). There's also talk of N5/Gamecube 2 details. Two hardware revelations in one bowel-shattering announcement? It's all too much.

This month we kick off the coverage with a look at some of the big names at this year's show. Most do come with a number at the end, it has to be said – but you can't knock the likes of *Paper Mario 2, Metroid Prime 2* and *Resi 4*. We've also got some exclusive insight into *Need for Speed Underground 2, Def Jam Fight for New York* and *GoldenEye 2*, among others. The future's looking better than we ever imagined. Here's a taster…

TURN OVER
For your essential guide to the major titles at this year's show. Next issue we'll bring you Part Two, with even more hands-on details and analysis.



E3 FLAT OUT

Paper Mario was one of our favourite N64 games, making the most of the possibilities two-dimensional characters bring to a game, so we're really pleased to see the flat man return. The sequel's got a lot to match up to, but it looks like it'll do it.

△ Mario folds himself up into a paper aeroplane – one of his many new abilities that he'll need to use to solve puzzles.

△ As you can see from this shot, Mario and Koopa are paper-thin.

△ Expect classic enemies to appear left, right and centre.

NGC INSIDER KNOWLEDGE

When's it out?
Paper Mario is due for release this year, although a firm date hasn't been set yet. Hope for Xmas…

△ Just look at it! You can't argue that, simple as it is, the game is visually stunning – boss battles like this are frequent occurrences.

△ It seems that the game world is far bigger this time around.

△ Interesting action elements keep the battles feeling fresh.





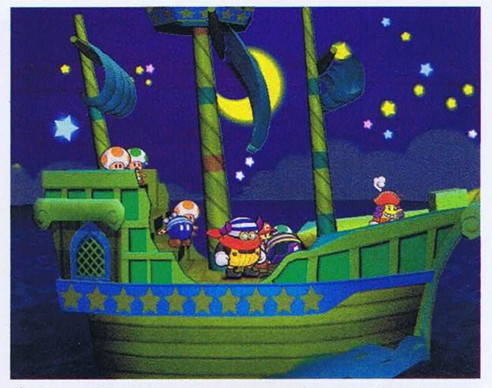








△ Poor old Luigi. He's always being left at home on his own while his brother plays the hero...



△ Games like this make you appreciate the rich history and wealth of characters that Nintendo can draw on.



PAPER MARIO 2

Nintendo flex their creative muscle once more as the plumber proves he can do RPGs as well as the best of them...



Overshadowed by his much-loved and universally acclaimed platforming series are Mario's criminally underplayed RPG adventures. They've been released with little in the way of fanfare – you'd be easily forgiven for not even knowing they existed. Which is a shame, because all of them, without exception, have proved themselves to be highly enjoyable and rewarding titles.

Super Mario RPG on SNES, *Paper Mario*, which came towards the end of N64's life cycle, and the more recently released GBA *Mario and Luigi Superstar Saga*, despite being quite different games in terms of the way they played, have a number of things in common.

They all boasted sweet, innovative little touches – like *Mario and Luigi's* excellent dual character control and *Paper Mario's* beautiful and original graphical style.

> "ALL OF MARIO'S RPG ADVENTURES, WITHOUT EXCEPTION, HAVE PROVED TO BE HIGHLY ENJOYABLE"

Delightful surprises lurk around every corner – not just in terms of the way they play but also the games' consistently brilliant narratives. It's in this latter aspect that Mario's RPGs truly shine.

Nintendo aren't a company that you can often accuse of being face-achingly funny. But as their past RPG efforts so easily demonstrate, they are cunningly self-aware. They frequently crack jokes at their own expense, name-drop classic games and mock their own clichés, making for some amusingly memorable moments. Princess Peach despairing at the fact that her wardrobe is full of identical pink dresses in *Paper Mario* and the characters in *Mario and Luigi* who are always pestering the brothers to show off their 'jumping skills', are just a couple of examples of the kind of cheeky, self-referential nods and in-jokes that you can expect in *Paper Mario 2*.

BREAK IT UP

Structurally speaking, it sticks to the format of most console RPGs, with the game broken up into a number of conventional elements.

You have the exploration side of things, where you scour the

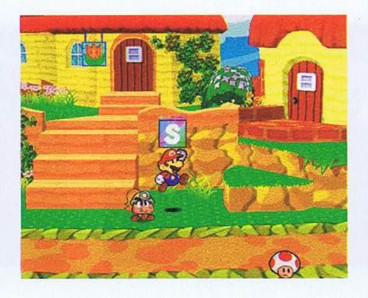
GOOMBA

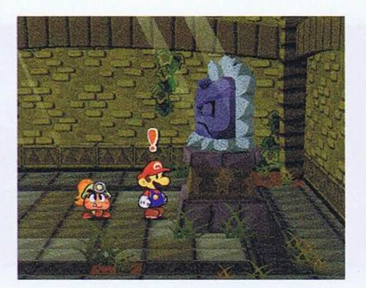


In the screenshots of the battles you may have noticed that Mario has a little Goomba sidekick. This is just one of a number of companions that Mario will be able to call upon during his adventure. Mario can select one sidekick at a time to assist him during a fight, and each will have his or her own special attacks and abilities that can be used in battle and to help solve puzzles in the main game world. Nurturing your sidekicks and selecting the right one for the job is an integral part of progressing through the game.

"Nintendo are really exploiting the visual style"











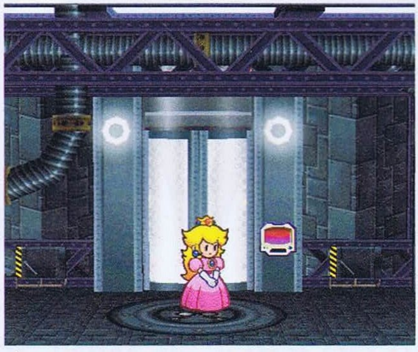
△ Battles now take place on this theatrical stage. You need to earn the respect of all those Koopas and Toads in the crowd by fighting in style.



△ The game world is all in 3D and is viewed from side-on. As ever, the art direction in every area of the Mushroom Kingdom is absolutely gorgeous.



△ How will Mazza get out of this predicament?



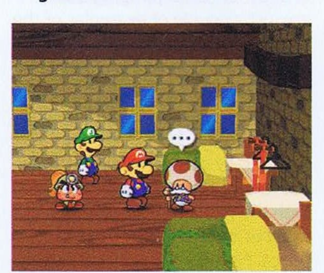
△ Will Peach will be a playable character again?



△ Hit A on impact to cause some extra damage.



△ Attack, Item, Special Attack and Magic. Standard RPG battle choices.



△ Ah, look at your little Goomba sidekick. Go on – kick it…



Mushroom Kingdom looking for secrets and items. There are towns and other areas where you can shop and talk to NPCs to pick up clues and side-quests (something that features very heavily) and then you have the inevitable overland journeys, complete with enemy encounters, as well as the 'dungeon' sections that lead to boss battles.

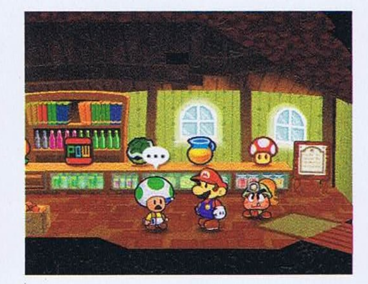
While these tried-and-tested elements may seem familiar, *Paper Mario* never really *feels* as though you've played it before – new life is breathed into every area.

FIGHT CLUB

Take the game's battle system as an example. To begin with there are no random encounters. You can see enemies wandering around (so you can avoid them if you don't want the EXP or the hassle). Simply wandering into them will trigger a turn-based battle. This simple process also has a layer of strategy. If you begin the fight by jumping onto the enemy – catching it unawares – you'll start the battle with a free hit. Likewise, if Mario is ambushed into an encounter, Mario himself will take a hit at the start of the battle. Again, the basic battles will seem pretty familiar to anyone who's played an RPG before. Mario's party stands on the left, the attacking enemies on the right, and then they take it in turns to dish out the damage by selecting attacks, items, magic and so on.

Paper Mario's battles aren't quite that straightforward, though, as they incorporate action elements. Nintendo call them 'Timing Action Commands'. This basically boils down to timing button presses when Mario's – or his chosen sidekick's – attack connects with the enemy. Time your button press correctly and Mario will hit with a little extra damage. Likewise, you can use these button presses defensively, decreasing damage a little when you're attacked. Not only does this give you the edge in battles, but it's a rather clever way of making sure that battles are more involving. You don't just select an option and watch the action unfold, instead you have to concentrate and react to the battle. Just as it did in the original *Paper*

"MARIO WILL BE ABLE TO FOLD HIMSELF UP INTO A PAPER AEROPLANE IN ORDER TO FLY"









△ Interacting with NPCs is an all-important part of the experience. You're handed little tasks and side-quests all the time, so there's plenty to keep you occupied aside from the adventure's main objective. Complete them and you'll be well rewarded.

Mario and in *Mario and Luigi*, the timing technique goes a long way to taking the monotony out of gaining EXP through turn-based battles. In *Paper Mario 2* there's a new addition to the battle system. Battles are played out on a kind of theatrical stage, complete with an audience. This time, Mario can earn powerful special attacks by pleasing the crowd of spectators by successfully pulling off the Timed Action Commands and battling intelligently. The better he does, the more power will be at his disposal.

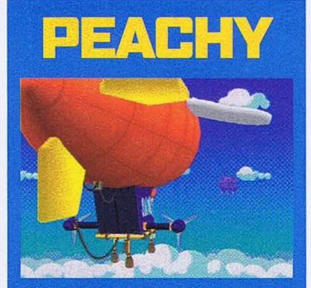
PICTURE PERFECT

Thankfully, one aspect hasn't been changed from its N64 predecessor – the charming visuals. The game takes place in 3D environment viewed from a fixed camera. All the houses, castles, dungeons and other environments are all in 3D. However, all the characters (which include anyone and everyone from the Mushroom Kingdom that you can think of) are all paper-thin – hence the name.

This time around, Nintendo are really exploiting this visual style as much as possible, with the feature being implemented to solve puzzles and such like. Mario will be able to use his physical attributes to slide between cracks and gaps. He'll be able to roll himself into tubes and, even more interestingly, be able to fold himself up into a paper aeroplane in order to fly to previously inaccessible areas. No doubt these aren't the only examples of Mario-based origami that we can expect.

If you've never been tempted by any of Mario's RPGs in the past, we'd say that the time to start is approaching.

PEACHY



In the original *Paper Mario*, there were occasions where the action swapped between Mario and Peach. Peach's sections involved solving puzzles and stealth-style sections where she would eavesdrop on the Koopas' plans as well as finding items for Mario that could be transferred from Bowser's castle via a magic chest. Some screenshots suggest that this dual character system may be present in *Paper Mario 2* – a welcome addition indeed, as previously, they proved a relaxing change of pace.

E3
THIS TIME IT'S PERSONAL

NGC took a pre-E3 trip to Vancouver in Canada to get exclusive insight into EA's new racer. After a tour of their outrageous, town-sized development studios we got to sit down with Chuck Osieja, Executive Producer on *NFSU2*...

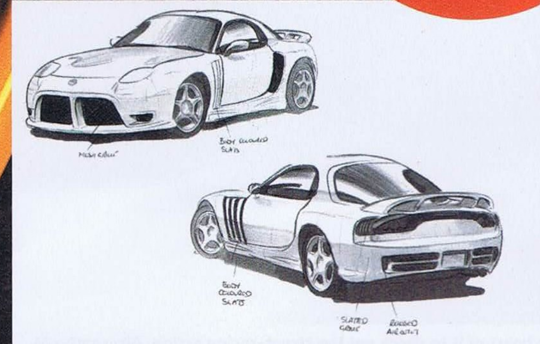




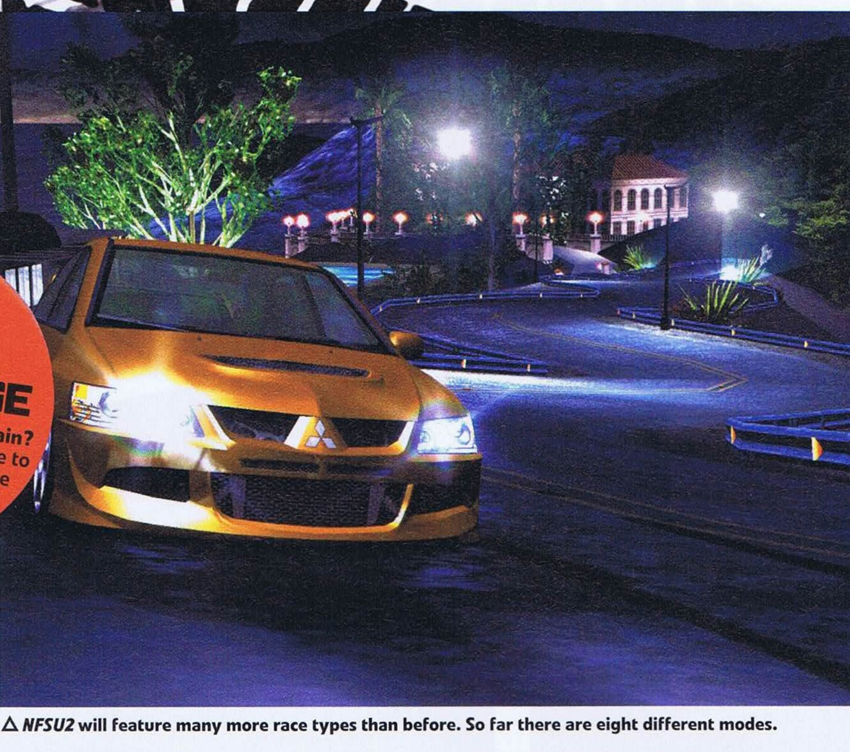

NGC INSIDER KNOWLEDGE

Feel the need for speed again? You're going to have to have to wait 'til the Autumn. Or the Fall. Fact: they're the same thing.

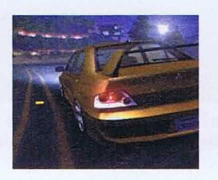
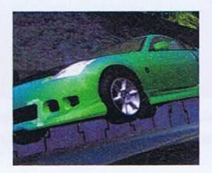
NFS:UNDERGROUND 2

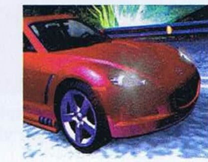


Wide Body Kit 2



△ *NFSU2* will feature many more race types than before. So far there are eight different modes.

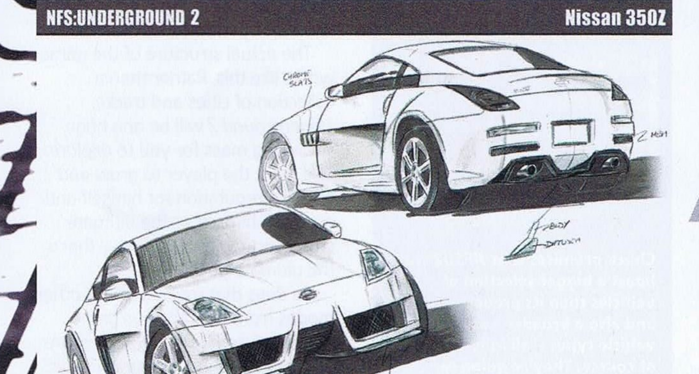





NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 2

Bigger, better, bolder. EA's ambitious sequel to the surprise hit of 2003 looks to raise the bar for racers…

NFS:UNDERGROUND 2 — Nissan 350Z



Wide Body Kit 1

△ Some concept art for one of the body kits. EA are really going all-out to come up with some weird and wonderful designs this time around.

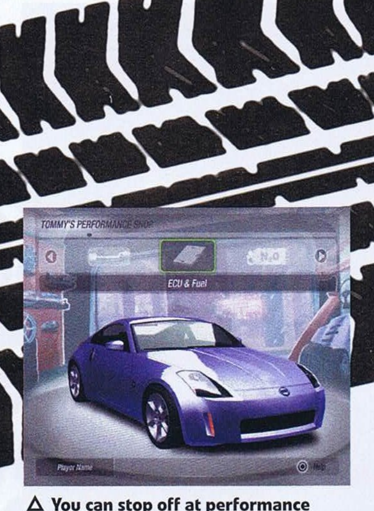


"A couple of ground rules first," explains Chuck Osieja, Executive Producer for *Need For Speed: Underground 2*. "We're not going to go into specific details about feature sets or anything like that – more the high-level elements that will make *Underground 1* feel like an old game." Good – this is exactly what **NGC** wants to know.

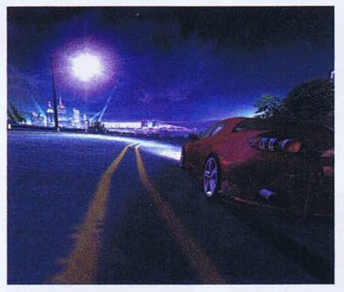
"*Underground 2* has been in development for about a year and a half. We actually started making it before we finished *Underground 1* and our main focus was the idea of uncovering and exploring a city's counter-culture.

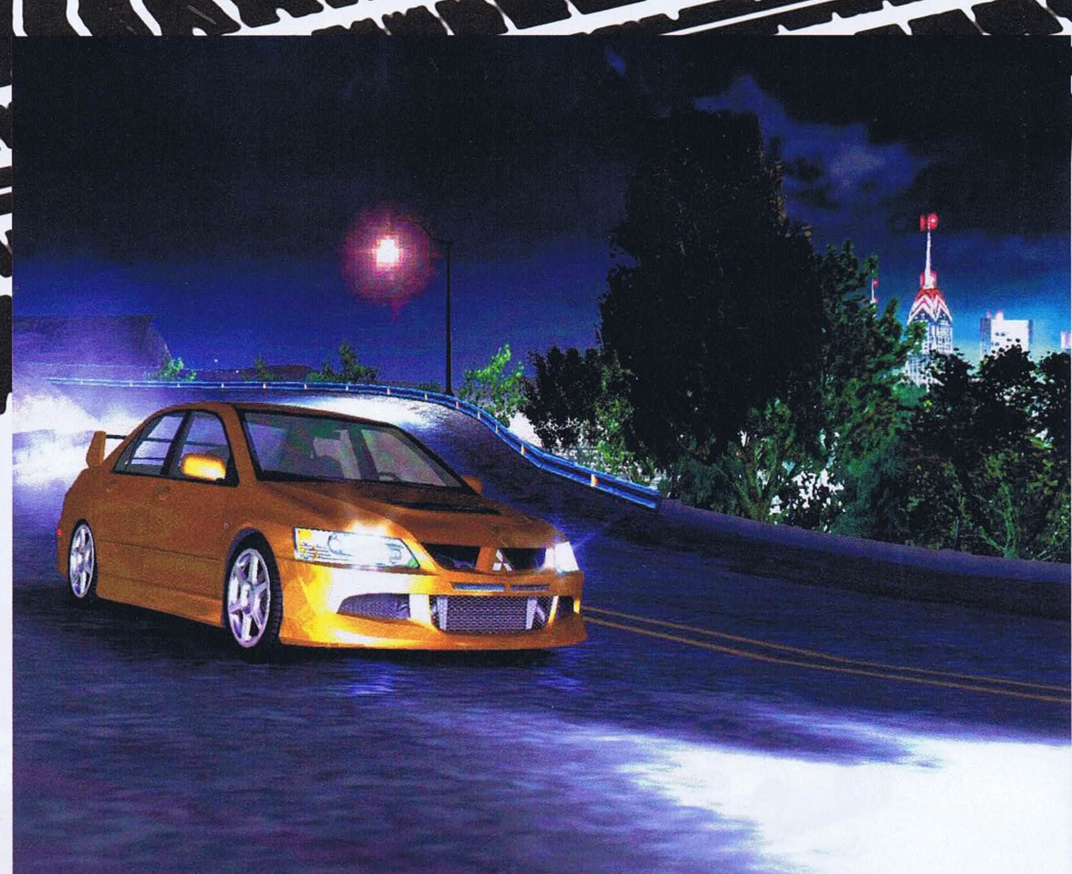
"What we mean by that is, in any given city, you have two functioning levels. There's the stuff that everybody sees – the sort of things tourists see – and then there's the sub-culture, the illegal stuff, the areas and events that only the locals or those that know a city really well are aware of. This is the basic premise behind *Underground 2*. Finding out where all the races are, where all the best cars

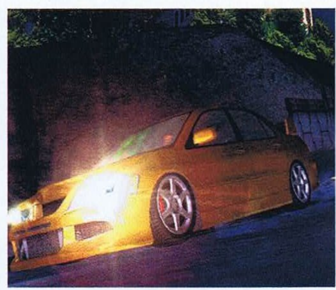
> **"THERE'S THE SUB-CULTURE, THE ILLEGAL STUFF, THE AREAS AND EVENTS THAT ONLY THE LOCALS KNOW OF"**

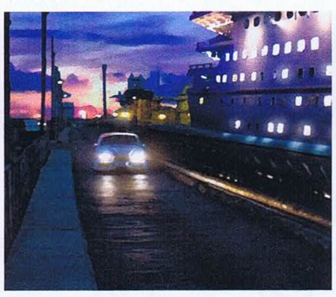


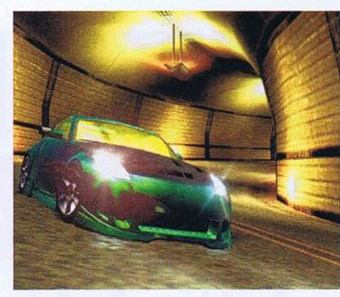
△ You can stop off at performance shops to upgrade your vehicle.

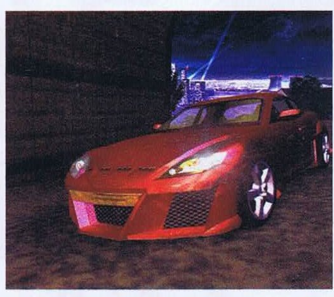

△ EA are including a replay option, letting you savour your victories.


△ See that city in the distance there? Well, you can drive into the heart of it to check out the street-racing action. Alternatively, you can just drive around the outlying areas and suburbs looking for a more open-road style of race. Choices, choices.


△ All the vehicles in the game are fully licensed, so you can't smash them up.


△ Er, this isn't actually a screenshot, it's another piece of concept art.


△ The car models are looking superb, but then we'd expect nothing less.


△ The game has five distinct inner-city areas reflecting tuner-culture.


△ The game is all about building your reputation.



are, where all the best parts are. It's all about exploration."

Listening to Chuck enthuse about this latest instalment, it's easy to be impressed. EA are looking to revamp the game completely, to focus on the original's best aspects and enhance them beyond recognition. To really take the series to the next level.

BORN FREE

Let us explain. In *Underground 1*, for example, cities were divided up into a series of races and tracks that were interconnected, but you weren't able to drive *anywhere* on the roads. You were forced around pre-determined raceways. "In *Underground 2*, you can drive anywhere you want," says Chuck. "You're looking at a game-world approximately three times the size of the original city, with two to three times the density in terms of streets that you can navigate – in *Underground 1* there were loads of dead-end streets. Now you can go wherever you want."

The actual structure of the game works like this. Rather than a collection of cities and tracks, *Underground 2* will be one huge sprawling mass for you to explore. "We want the player to grow and create a reputation for himself and establish himself as the ultimate street racer within the city – that's the ultimate goal."

So does that mean that the other modes from the previous game, like 'Drag' and 'Drift', won't feature this time around? "Not at all!" says Chuck. "We found that those game modes really brought some great new experiences to the game and gave gamers who wanted a change from shaving seconds off their lap times something to get to grips with. This time around we'll be expanding on those modes.



TUNE IN



Chuck promises that *NFSU2* will boast a bigger selection of vehicles than its predecessor, and also a broader range of vehicle types – all fully licensed, of course. They're going to implement tuning options into the game too. "We're making it so that people who aren't really performance-savvy can get in there and mess with torque, camber and other stuff like that, but for people who understand cars, there'll be enough depth to tune up their creation to get more performance out of it than the average player."

We currently have eight different, non-traditional race modes available, and again these need to be found by exploring the city."

In a smart touch, this free-roaming element will replace the more traditional menu system for navigating between races. "You start off in a relatively small section of the city – we don't want to overwhelm players from the word go. By driving around you'll discover events and these will be added to your city map, allowing you to find them again much more easily. We've found this allows for a much more organic experience. We want players to be able to discover the game for themselves – you don't have to complete everything in the game if you don't want to."

DYNAMIC DRIVIN'

It's an encouraging change in direction, but EA aren't stopping there. "You can also drive up to other drivers in the game and challenge them to a race then and there. If you're driving on a freeway, for example, a driver may come up alongside you and challenge you to a race." Freeway? So there's a freeway in there too? "Yeah, circling the outside of the city there's a freeway that connects all the areas. We wanted to deliver as many different kinds of driving experiences as possible, from the more rigid, technical racing style from *Underground 1*, with its right-angle turns and so forth, to faster, open-road style sections from the older *Need for Speed* games. All of which will take place in less built up, more suburban and outlying areas of the city."

EA have taken a great deal of care to implement as many fresh ideas as possible. "We had many of these new ideas when we made the first game, and as soon as we realised that *Underground* was going to be a hit we started work on the sequel.

"We did a tour of Europe and North America and consulted with people immersed in 'tuner culture' to try to really improve the game. We didn't just want to create *Underground 1.5*. We wanted to make truly worthwhile sequel to push the boundaries of driving games…" From what we've seen, it'll do just that…

"RATHER THAN A COLLECTION OF CITIES, NFSU2 WILL BE ONE HUGE SPRAWLING MASS"

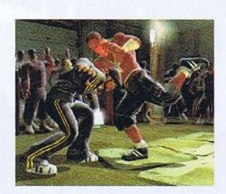
NO NEON?



If there's one thing that we found irritating in *NFSU*, it was the constant use of neon lighting and wet-look tarmac. Finding the way ahead became harder than it needed to be, and we longed for some variety. Things are changing this time. Not only will there be an assortment of lighting conditions (from dusk right through to dawn), but EA are also implementing a real-time weather system that will see dry tracks and rain affect the game's racing conditions. Along with huge range of racing locations, it means races should be far more varied from now on.








DEF JAM
FIGHT FOR NEW YORK

NGC INSIDER KNOWLEDGE
When's this mother out? *Def Jam: Fight For New York* will be out in both the US and Europe on 30th October 2004.

△ With the crowds, this reminds us of the ancient, digitised scrapper, *Pitfighter*… but that was rubbish.

Bye bye cuddly wrestling stuff! Hello senseless violence!

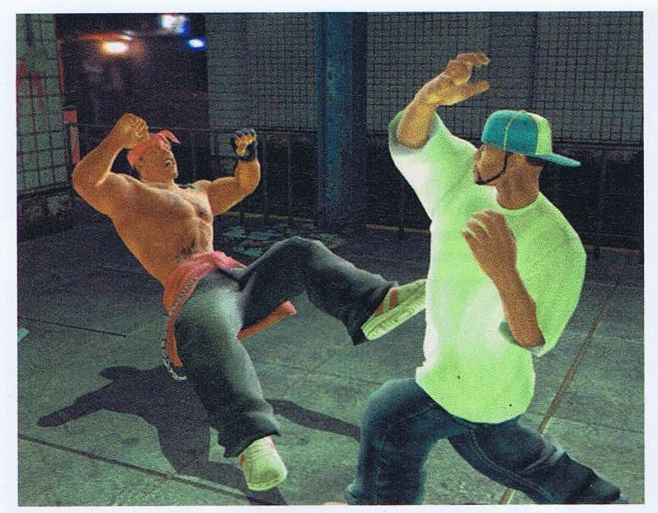
It's not often that we find games that genuinely make us laugh until our bellies hurt. You know, that state of pain where you're curled up double, tears streaming down your face and your abdomen threatening to close in on itself. True, there have been a couple in the past (remember *Beyblade?*), but those wretched turds always provoked the reaction for entirely the wrong reasons.

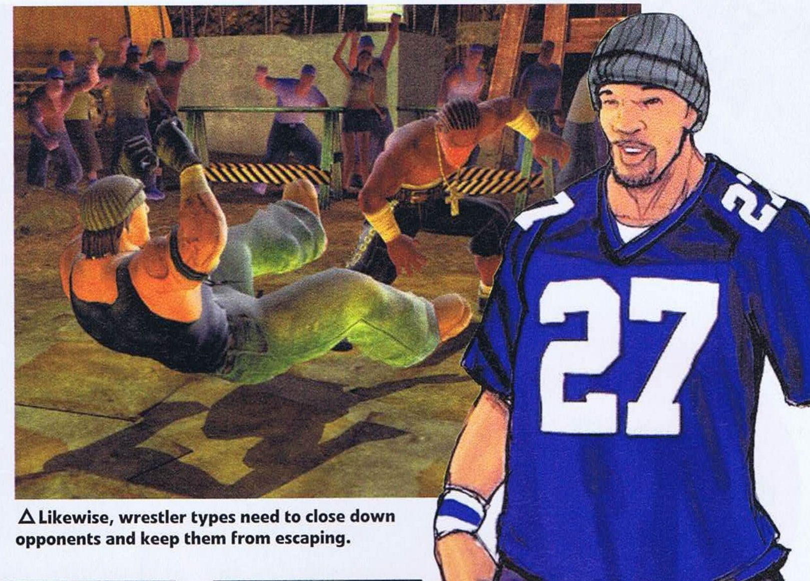
Why then is *Def Jam: Fight For New York* so goddamned funny? Well, it's all a question of pain. Busta Rhymes and Snoop Dogg, for example, go toe-to-toe in a tiny basement arena. Surrounded by a bloodthirsty crowd, Rhymes is clearly the Daddy in this particular skirmish. You see, he's got the Dogg in a head lock, and he's repeatedly ramming his smug face into one of the wooden posts on the outside of the arena. That's just not enough, though. The crowd wants more and hand him an iron bar. Snoop's head bounces off the post for the umpteenth time and rebounds off Rhymes' newly acquired weapon, sending him sliding across the floor like a dazed haddock on a Norwegian trawler. 'Haven't had enough yet, Mr Dogg?' we wonder to ourselves. Not if Rhymes has anything to do with it – he's busy stamping on the back of his head.

Yes, this is indeed for real.

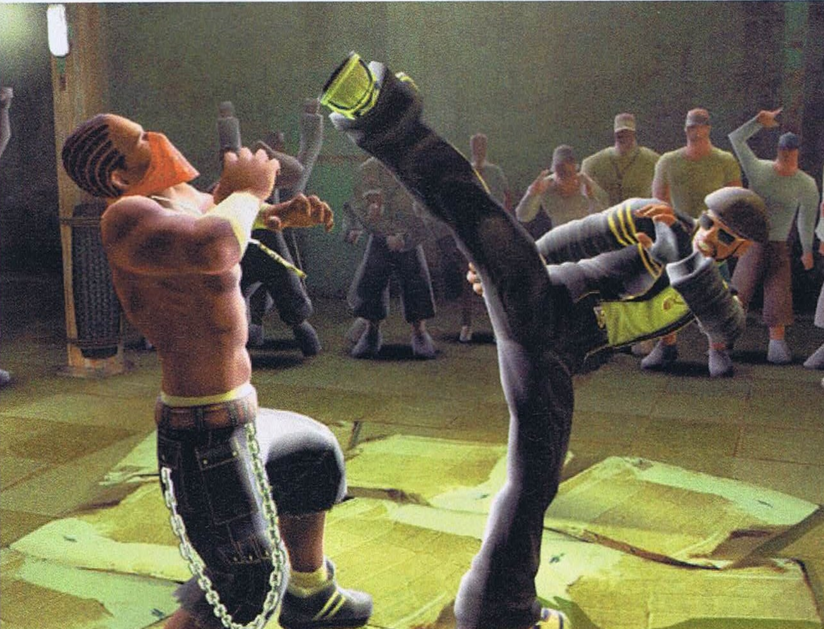
RUDE BOYS

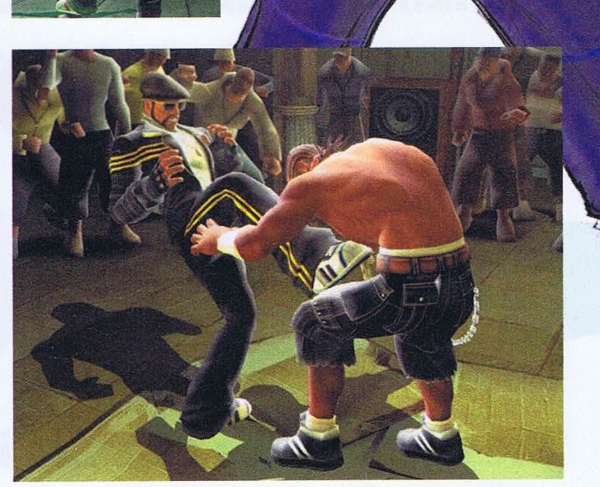
Now, we don't normally find senseless violence 'amusing' per se – it's just that *Def Jam FFNY* does it so, so well. The character models, for example, are superb. Detailed, and *huge* to boot, their chains and rings sparkle with unholy bling.


△ The variation in fighting styles allows for real strategy when it come to the bouts, with nimble fighters unable to hold their own at close quarters.



△ Likewise, wrestler types need to close down opponents and keep them from escaping.


△ Smash this guy in the face hard enough and for long enough and you'll mess him up real nice. If you want, you can chuck him to the crowd and let them have their fun. You can't say fairer than that.


△ Attacks *really* look like they're having the desired effect – ie making your opponent writhe, shudder and wince with the pain.

They're superbly animated too, with their bad-boy, hip-hop strutting and taunting helping to give the unrelenting brutality of it all an outrageous slapstick quality.

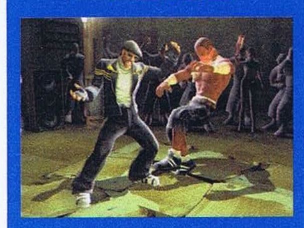
It's very obvious from early on then, that this *Def Jam* is quite different from (not to mention a surprise improvement on) its predecessor. First of all, it's not a wrestling game. Yes, there are wrestling elements in there – we'll get to that later – but the focus is primarily on street fighting.

There are over 40 artists and celebs (including the likes of Snoop, Rhymes, Method Man, Li'l Kim) to choose from. And fights take place in 22 different interactive arenas. These range from the Basement – the one you can see in most of these pictures – to burning warehouses, subway platforms and even office blocks.

There's also a pretty comprehensive create-a-fighter style option that allows to fashion your own hip-hop hero, who can then duke it out through the game's main Story mode.

You're able to choose between five basic fighting styles: street fighter; martial artist; submissions master; plain old wrestling (should please the spandex fans!); and kickboxing. From these basic styles you can grow your fighter, obtaining new moves and so on to strengthen their repertoire.

BLING



The hip-hop flavour of it all is really emphasised – right down to the way the fighters move. As you build up your character you'll get the chance to visit shops where you can purchase more and more outrageous costumes for your fighter. You can visit a tattoo artist, buy new clothes, jewellery (which incidentally, has been given an eye-dazzling makeover) and, if the mood takes you, you can get your hair cut.

So effectively then, it's a Barbie game. With knuckle-dusters and gold teeth.

> **"CHOOSE BETWEEN STREET FIGHTER, MARTIAL ARTIST, SUBMISSION MASTER, WRESTLING AND KICKBOXING"**

ASK THE AUDIENCE

One thing we particularly like is the use of the crowd surrounding the arenas. While they don't appear on every stage, they do serve a rather interesting purpose. To start with, they often force you and your opponent in to close proximity – ensuring that bouts are both hectic and tight – with no cheesy running away tactics. They also interact with the fighters. Get too close, for example, and they may attack. On other occasions they hand you weapons to use on your opponent and in one instance we even saw them hold a fighter so that his opponent could smack him about with some nasty-looking double-team moves.

So far then, this is looking tidier than yo mother. Yes? 

PRIMED AND READY

The sequel to one of last year's most-loved games is closer than you think – and sporting some smart new additions. For one, the hunter has become the hunted, adding new tensions to an already blissfully atmospheric series.



NGC INSIDER KNOWLEDGE
When will Echoes be in the shops? Well, it's rumoured to hit the US on 14th November. So, Xmas for the UK?

△ Samus gets one of the many additions to her arm cannon. Collecting and upgrading her Chozo-built power-suit is they key to unlocking and then exploring more and more of the detailed game world.



△ The morph ball comes in handy in multiplayer matches.



△ Another space pirate or an all-new type of enemy?



△ As you can see, the helmet's been updated slightly, with new visor and weapon icons as well as a new energy display.

METROID PRIME 2 ECHOES

The silent space assassin is back! All-new details and screens from Samus Aran's latest adventure…



rime, the first home console instalment of *Metroid* for ages, was arguably one of the best games of 2003. An engrossing, intense and superbly atmospheric first-person adventure, *Metroid Prime* showed us that the genre had plenty of room for originality. *Echoes* looks set to continue the trend with, intriguingly, the implementation of Light and Dark worlds. Samus will have to travel between the two in order to solve puzzles and open up her ever-expanding environment. A similar theme featured in *Zelda: Link to the Past*, but whether or not it will be implemented in the same kind of way remains to be seen.

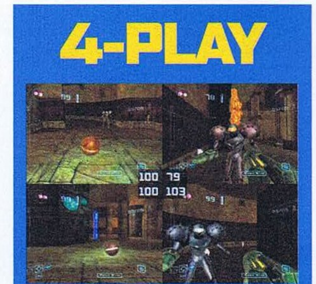
Another notable addition to the game is the 'Ing', a dark adversary that is trying to hunt down Samus. We're a little unsure as to who or what exactly this is, but we suspect it may be the creature that appears briefly at the end of *Metroid Prime*.

"ANOTHER NOTABLE ADDITION TO THE GAME IS THE 'ING', A DARK ADVERSARY THAT IS TRYING TO HUNT SAMUS"

If you managed to complete *Prime* with 100% item collection, you'll have seen a black metallic hand with an eye on the back bursting through a blob of Phazon as your reward. Also, in the E3 footage last year we saw a creature smashing Samus into the ground. We'd say that this is almost certainly the creature that'll hunt down Samus in *Echoes* – making it a direct sequel to the *Prime* side-story and therefore a prequel to *Metroid II* and *Super Metroid*.

Given all this, it sounds as though Retro Studios are really trying to add new elements to the classic exploration-heavy formula of previous games, rather than just bashing out a sequel. More info coming next issue…

4-PLAY



Multiplayer! At long last. As you can see from this shot, split-screen action is finally making its way to the series – something that many *Prime* fans have been waiting ages for. Whether or not it'll feature classic deathmatch modes is unknown, but if we had to guess, we'd say that Retro Studios won't settle for just basic skirmishes, instead opting for objective-based multiplayer games that involve reaching waypoints while fighting over key weapons and items.





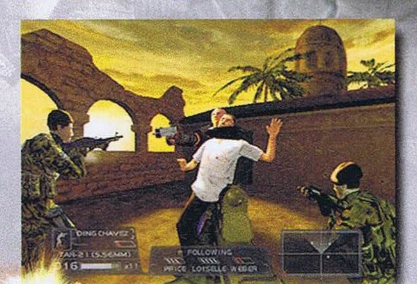


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PIK' OF THE BEST RTS'

As far as real-time strategy titles on Gamecube go, *Pikmin 2's* up there with the best. Next issue we'll bring you the full independent import review. Until then, feast your eyes on these detailed screens…

PIKMIN 2

The long-awaited sequel's pulled in some big scores in Japan. It certainly grows on you…



higsy's got a lot to answer for – A LOT, let us tell you. Fair enough, most of it does centre around his penchant for creating glorious videogame entertainment, but still, *there's a lot of it.* When he goes to his grave, he'll be remembered for bringing Mario, Donkey Kong and further icons of modern culture into the world, that much is a given. But *Pikmin*? That might get forgotten about – although it shouldn't be. It's wonderful.

Cue the improved sequel. Locked in development for what feels like an eternity (we played it at last year's E3, and before that…), *Pikmin 2's* now available on import. And what a triumph it is, getting rid of the 'irritation' from the first game (the time limit), adding a new character and bolstering its two-player mode, giving you a couple of bonus Pikmin to play with and more. It wants you to have fun.

> "FIVE TYPES OF PIKMIN, TREASURE ALL OVER THE PLACE AND THE CHANCE TO GO 'UNDERGROUND'"

The original game was released way back in 'Nam (er, 2001) and focused on the exploits of Captain Olimar, a crazy kind of space ace who was forced to land on the Pikmins' planet after his ship was wrecked by a meteor. The tiny veg creatures helped him fix his ship and got him on his way home, which is where the events of *Pikmin 2* kick off. After reaching his home planet and returning to work, he discovers that a new recruit, Loojie (the second playable character) has managed to ruin the company – if they don't get a cash injection soon, they'll end up bankrupt. So, their boss sends them back to the planet in order to bring back some more potentially valuable objects…

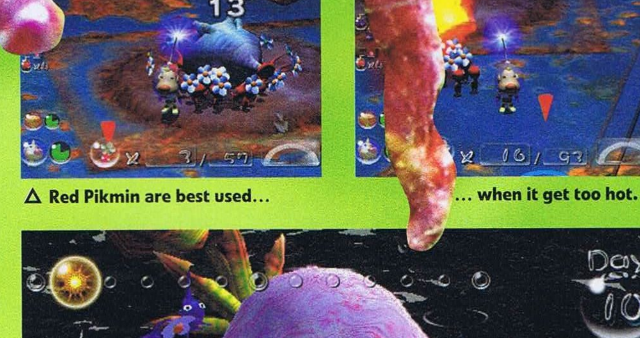
So here you are. With five types of Pikmin, treasure scattered all around, a host of new monsters to avoid and the chance to go 'underground' to an item-rich world. The only thing is, there's no chance to sprout new Pikmin down there and the monsters just keep getting tougher…

HOLES



Find the 'blowholes' (which look like mini volcanoes) across the planet and you'll be able to enter the underground zone. As mentioned, it's a place where there's some great items to be found – but also great danger. As you go through this area, the enemies you'll come across increase in strength the further you explore. The fact that the Pikmin you go in with are all you get means that you'll have to approach things with a little more thought. But the pain makes the pleasure seem so sweet, apparently…





△ Red Pikmin are best used… … when it get too hot.



△ Each Pikmin type has their own specialisation. Blue ones are the only sort which can take a dip into water – as you can see above. Lovely ripples.



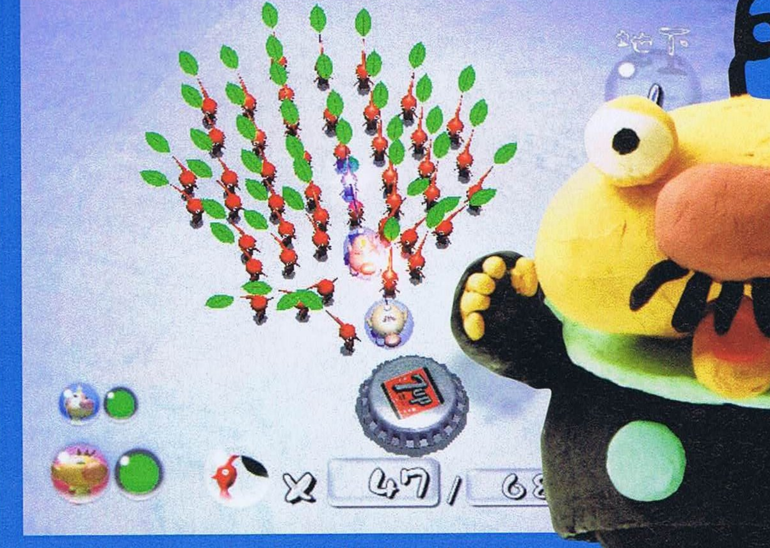
△ You'll meet dead hard beasts in the underworld. Bye bye Red 'min.



△ That warm hue means only one thing – night's on its way. Run!

GET ME AN ORANGE

Yes, your boss is that strapped for cash…



Despite it looking like simple trash, everything has a value on the planet. And the gods have been kind – look, a 7Up bottle top.



Only by collecting the finest items will you be able to get your company out of debt.



As there's no time limit, there's time to hunt around for the best stuff. Gloves are great.

DID YOU KNOW? *Pikmin 2's* compatible with GBA and the import-only e-Reader. You get three free *Pikmin* puzzle game cards with the Japan Gamecube game.



DOUBLE TAKE

Why play *Pikmin 2* alone when there's a chance to cooperate with – or crush – a friend?

Nintendo have included a pair of two-player modes in the game: Challenge (to the left) and Battle (below). In Challenge mode, you get the chance to team up with a friend, head down into the underground zone and simply go for a collecting high score. Don't forget there are no onions down here to help you raise new Pikmin, so you'll have to work as a team. Battle mode is a head-to-head challenge where you run into your rival's territory and collect marbles. Don't be the one who loses all your marbles. See what we did there? Pikmin make us unfunny…

ROAR MEET

There are more than 60 creatures on the planet. Once you come across one it'll be saved to your library, where you can watch them or give them a carrot…

△ Size means nothing. It'll soon come down under all the reds…

BURIED TREASURE

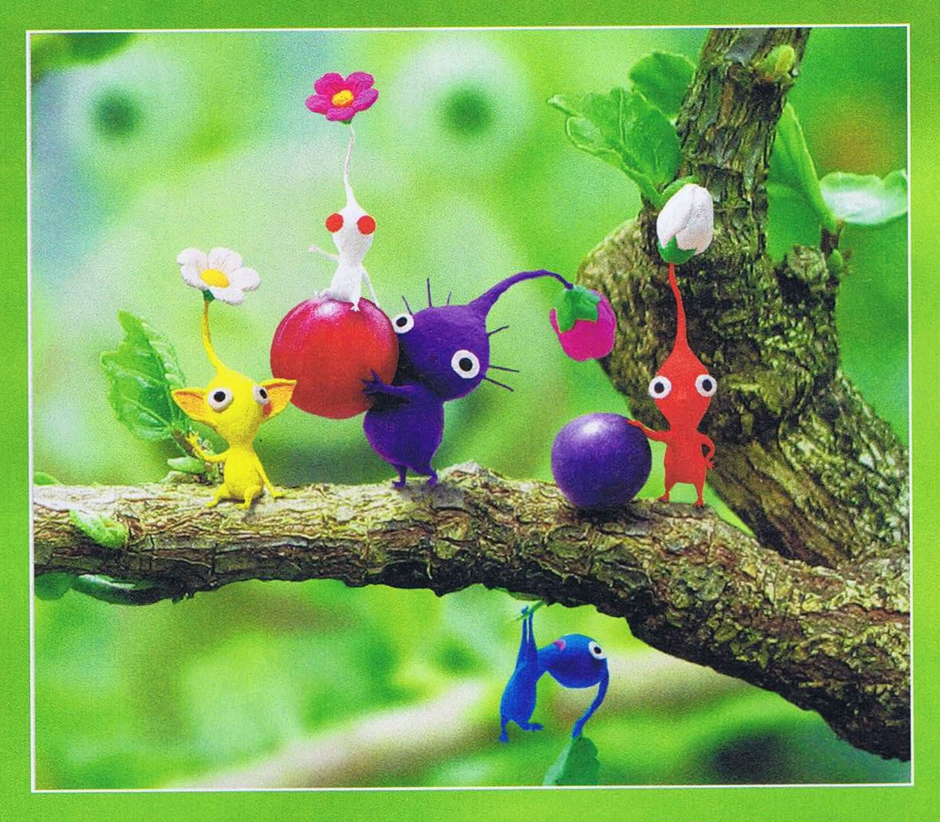
Not every item stares you in the face…

△ Sensing something beneath the soil, you send out your speedy white Pikmin. Remember this…


YELLOW: We hate them. They can't tell jokes.

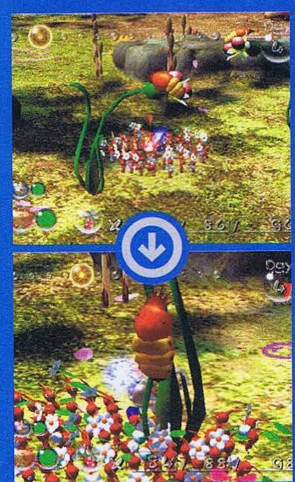

WHITE: Fast and packed with tasty poison.


PURPLE: Strong and slow, but can't be thrown far.




BLUE: The only Pikmin that can survive underwater. Watch the others drown…


RED: While other 'min burn to a crisp when near a flame, these stand firm.

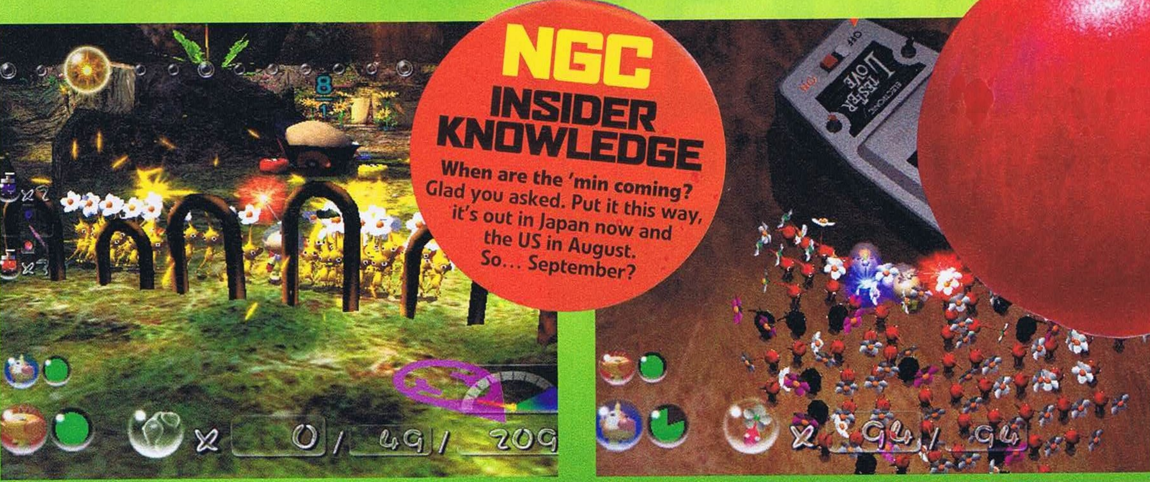

△ A grub poses no threat whatsoever. We. Must. Collect.


△ There's only one way to carry them – on their stinking backs.


△ As well as many new faces, some old favourites return.


△ Oh dear. The Pikmin seem to be getting wiped out…


△ … and again here. Be careful. They don't grow on trees, y'know.



△ Fry the yellow fools! Oh hang on. They're on our side.

△ You've found a Love Tester – this'll come in very handy.

DID YOU KNOW? There's no sense of time when you're in the 'underground' world – so there's no need to rush back to the home ship before night sets in.



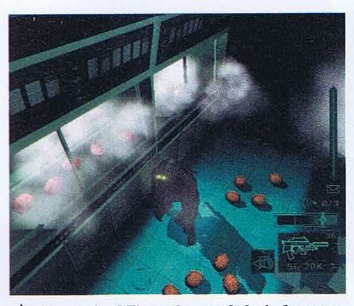
E3 FIRST PLAY

We've got our hands on a very early Gamecube version, and it compares well with the Xbox original. Water effects and some of the lighting have yet to be added, but the controls work well and the framerate seems to be improved. No sign of an online multiplayer mode, though. Bah.

△ Sam visits a cryogenics lab fairly early in the game. Here's the corpse-filled cellar.

SPLINTER CELL PANDORA TOMORROW

Break out the smallpox vaccine – Sam Fisher's hunting terrorists again…


△ Braaaains! Tipped out of their freezer jars by somebody. You can shoot them.


△ A touch of the old thermal vision will cut through this haze in no time.


△ Before dropping down a vent shaft you can poke a special camera in there.


△ It's always tempting to waste civilians, but you fail the mission.



NGC INSIDER KNOWLEDGE

When's GC *Pandora* coming? We reckon it'll hit in late June/early July. Summer's not looking blockbuster game-lite now…

△ The dual-analogue controls are like a first-person game, except you can get a good look at Sam's detailed face. He even blinks.


△ You'll meet plenty of characters, some more helpful than others.


△ Grab him and use him as a human shield. Very effective.


△ Luckily Sam has unlimited dangling power in his fingertips.


Ubi Soft's master of stealth returns to GC this summer, to save the world from smallpox bombs and do a spot of grittily atmospheric, highly enjoyable killing.

Pandora Tomorrow features a few additions to last year's original *Splinter Cell* – there's a handful of new moves, improved graphics and more varied environments – but Clancy fans will be pleased to hear it's basically more of the same.

The aim is to sneak past the bad guys by crouching in the darkness. An indicator shows how well Fisher is hidden, and if there's nowhere suitably shady then you can make use of the best real time lighting in any game to date – light bulbs can be shot out, or you can even duck into the moving shadows cast by billowing sheets of fabric.

"FISHER CAN WHISTLE TO LURE ENEMIES AND IS NOW ABLE TO OPEN DOORS WHILE LUGGING DEAD BODIES"

It's gorgeous to look at, and incredibly compelling to play. Although the linear structure means there are no alternative routes and no freedom to work out your own solutions to puzzles, the way forward isn't always obvious. You'll have to survey the entire area and make full use of a wide array of gadgets before the solutions become apparent.

Fisher can whistle to lure enemies into ambushes, and is now able to open doors while lugging dead bodies – previously you had to go through the painful process of dropping the corpse, opening the door, picking up the body again and, more often than not, watching the door slam shut automatically before you could squeeze through.

There's also an all-new SWAT turn move, which is a kind of pirouette used for flitting invisibly across open doorways. Unlike the original game, binoculars can be used to scope the surroundings even if you're not equipped with a sniper rifle. Save points aren't particularly well-placed though, so you'll have to repeat sections several times before you get it right. We'll update you on *Pandora* next issue. Hell, we might even bring you a review…

KILLINGS



When bloodshed is required, Fisher comes equipped with a multi-purpose machine gun that doubles as a sniper rifle and can be fitted with various non-lethal attachments. These include a sticky shocker that paralyses multiple enemies if you fire it onto a wet floor. Experimenting with the gadgets (some of which you never actually need to use) is half the fun – that and shooting unconscious people so you can watch their bodies cool in thermal vision.





△ Waiting with a surprise for this unsuspecting Zergling. Nova is always prepared.



△ In the vehicle hangar – you can drive these things if you want.

STARCRAFT GHOST

Stealth and psychic shenanigans in gaming's richest sci-fi universe…



△ Protoss – an alien species with the strongest psychic abilities in the game. Don't mess.



△ That's a Terran marine. He might not be your friend.



At first glance it seems like Blizzard's stealthy action adventure takes the hugely popular *Starcraft* universe from the PC-based strategy games and gives it a heavy dose of *Splinter Cell*.

To a certain extent that's true, but there's actually a whole lot more going on in *Starcraft Ghost* than meets the eye. For starters, it promises to be one of those games you can play almost any way you like. Your character, blonde Ghost Operative Nova, can use her psychic talents to sneak past enemies by turning practically invisible, or slow down time to mix it up with a posse of heavily armed space marines.

Get close to an enemy without being spotted and Nova can dispose of him in a number of satisfyingly fatal ways. As you should know by now, you need to hide dead bodies to avoid setting off an alarm.

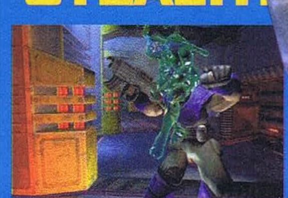
Alternatively Nova can remain at a distance and call down EMP strikes to disable enemy technology. If she spots an army gathering its resources ready for a ground assault, she can even get her pals back home to send over a nuclear bomb or two.

SPACE SMART

The game's artificial intelligence promises to adapt to all of these potential tactics, making sure you never have an easy ride.

For example, while using the cloaking ability to creep unseen through a Terran base, you might have to shoot out a thermal camera – the guards will spot this, and send out a probe to search for hidden life-forms. A similar thing might happen if your footsteps are overheard. With your cover blown, you'll have to figure

STEALTH

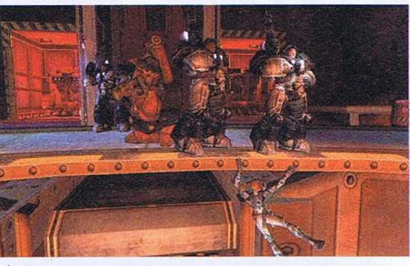


Cloaking ability seems like an unfair advantage in a stealth game, but the enemies in *Starcraft Ghost* are smart enough to know ways to flush Nova out of her hiding place. Terrans, the main race you'll be using cloaking power against, are extremely suspicious and will react to unexplained noises by sweeping the area with scanners which will blow your cover. You'll need to use other powers, such as thermal vision and hyperspeed, to make sure you're never drawn into a fight you're unlikely to win.




△ Use Nova's psi-powers to cloak from any kind of creature except the mighty Protoss.


△ We prefer the Zerg warriors with wings, or the massive, near invincible Ultralisk beasts.


△ Sometimes it's best to avoid a fight. Most of the time in fact, until you can get some support.


△ Operating a massive gun turret isn't stealthy, but sometimes there are hundreds of Zerg to annihilate.


△ Now that's gotta hurt. If you manage to sneak up on an enemy you'll have one of a number of stealth-kill animations to enjoy.



NGC INSIDER KNOWLEDGE

When's it out? Autumn 2004
Did you know... Blizzard keep a 'craft database, to avoid errors.

△ The insectoid Zerg come in many forms, all of them fairly nasty.


△ Terrans have the technology to make battle mechs like this one.


△ Lighting effects and other snazzy visual touches are almost complete.

out a new way of achieving your objective – take an alternate route, hack a computer to reset the security system, or shut down the entire place using an EMP bomb.

There are plenty of possibilities throughout, and just when you think you've figured out how your human foes are likely to react in any given situation, you'll meet one of the two alien races you're also going to have to battle with.

The Zerg are relatively dumb, relying on physical strength and numerical superiority rather than high-tech weapons. Nova won't last long against the larger varieties of Zerg without some sort of technological aid to even things out. Zerg missions involve epic-scale outdoor battles, blazing gun turrets and nukes.

The Protoss are a psychic species, using their minds to compensate for what they lack in strength and speed. Nova's cloaking ability doesn't cut it when Protoss are nearby, so you'll have to figure out other ways to get around their heavy defences and uncanny awareness.

"ZERG MISSIONS INVOLVE EPIC-SCALE OUTDOOR BATTLES, BLAZING GUN TURRETS AND NUKES"

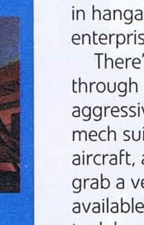
You'll find drivable vehicles dotted around the environments, either as the wreckage of some previous battle or right at the source, nice and shiny and waiting in hangars to be stolen by some enterprising thief.

There's a tank for ploughing through hordes of beefy, aggressive Zerg, an armoured mech suit and a low-level attack aircraft, among others. You can grab a vehicle whenever it's available – there are no specific tank levels or aircraft levels.

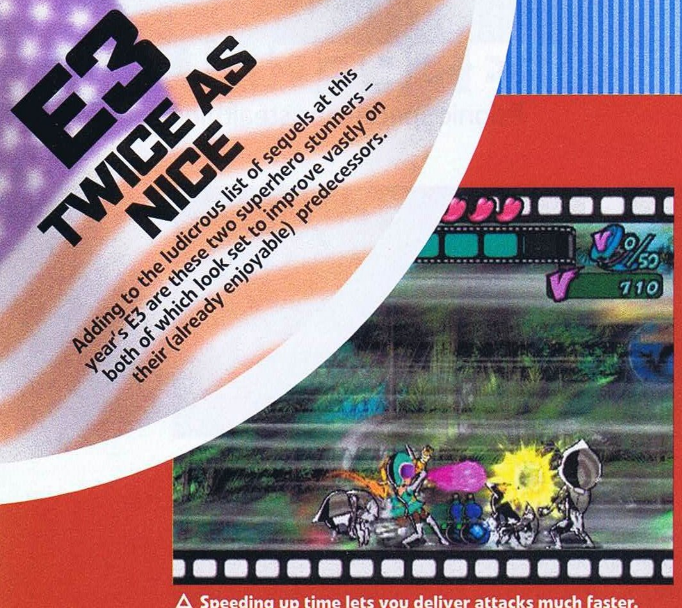
With touches of *Starcraft* strategy throughout the game, as well as combat, stealth and some cool gadgets, this is shaping up to be a very promising game. By the time you read this we'll have played a much more complete version, so we'll be in more of a position to let you know whether *Starcraft Ghost* is likely to live up to its potential.

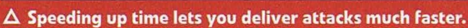
Be sure to pick up next month's **NGC** for more news…

GADGETS



Like *Splinter Cell*, for the majority of the game you have to make do with one main weapon that serves a variety of functions. The standard rifle works equally well as a sniper weapon or an automatic bullet-sprayer, plus there are multiple varieties of projectile designed for every possible situation. Other gadgets include a short-range radar that shows how much noise you're making, and a device for hacking into security terminals via a brief puzzle sub-game. James Bond would be proud, probably.





△ Speeding up time lets you deliver attacks much faster.







△ Slowing down time will make flying enemies fall.

VIEWTIFUL



△ Sylvia – Joe's girlfriend from the first game – has a different skill-set to take advantage of.

'Henshin-a-go-go-baby!' There you go. We've got it out of the way. Now read on.

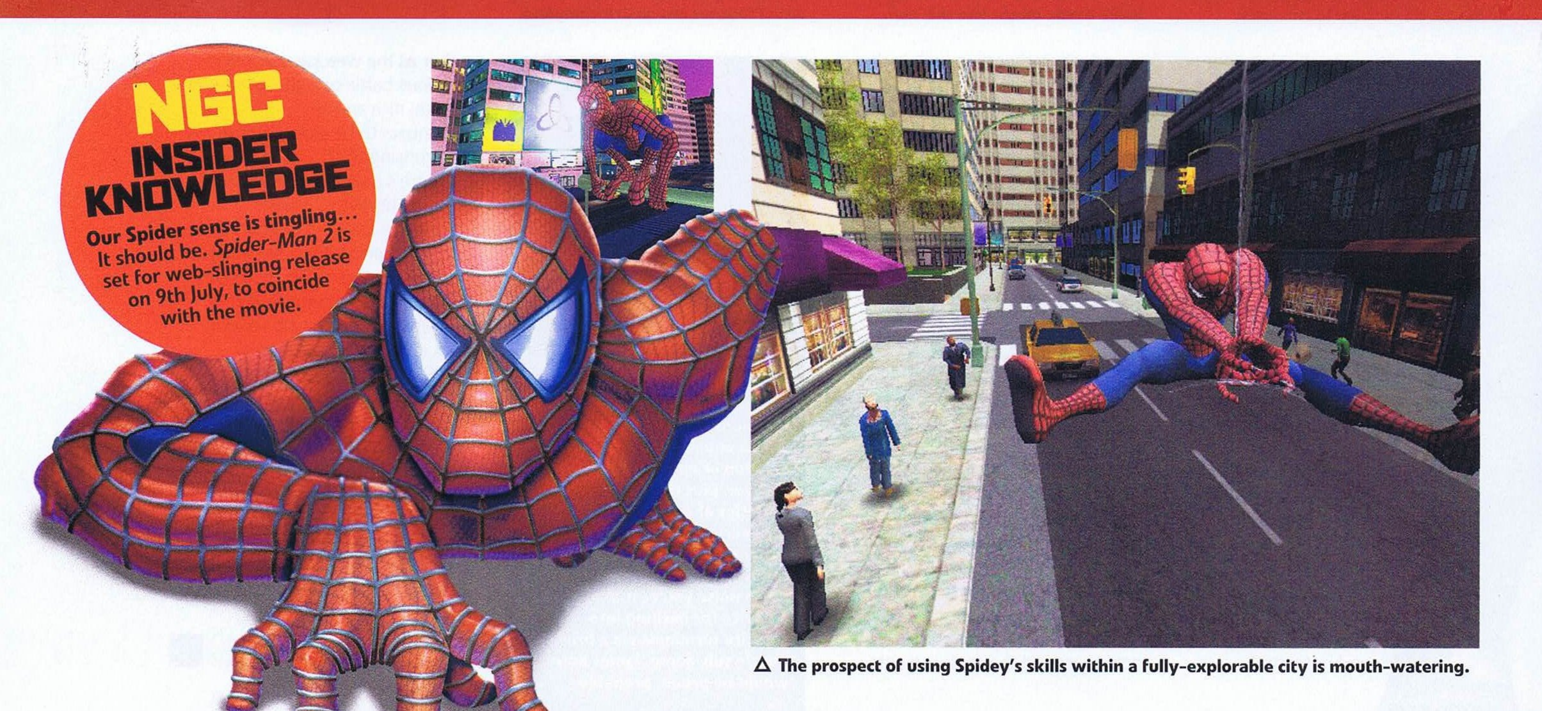
If you never picked up a copy of *Viewtiful Joe* then you need to ask yourself some serious questions. Like "Why am I missing out on one of last year's most innovative titles?"

The original 'VFX' game was one of the most refreshing experiences of recent years. It was a 'simple' 2D side-scrolling fighter whose emphasis was not just on fighting, but on fighting beautifully with flamboyant moves and combos – something that you were graded on as you worked your way through the levels.

Capcom already have a sequel well under way, so if you didn't buy the first game you have a chance to redeem yourself. Details so far are promising. Once again Joe will be required to save his stunning cel-shaded world from disaster using his a combination of kung fu and special VFX skills.

These VFX abilities enable him to speed up or slow down time and zoom in on the action, allowing him to dodge bullets and deliver flurries of punches at lightning speed. This time around Capcom are including another VFX skill in the shape of 'Replay', which, we suspect, may work a little like the Sands of Time in the *Prince of Persia* game of the same name.

A new addition is the ability to play as Joe's girlfriend Sylvia from the start (you had to rescue her in the first game before you could use her), and Capcom have brought back Joe's flying vehicle, the six machine, which will be fully revamped. Go-go indeed.



△ The prospect of using Spidey's skills within a fully-explorable city is mouth-watering.

DID YOU KNOW? The first ever Spider-Man Comic, 'The Amazing Spider-Man' (1963), is worth – in absolute, just-off-the-press, mint condition – $48,000. Even in poor condition, they can sell for $1,000.

JOE 2

△ Rescuing Sylvia was your goal in the last game.

△ The 'Slow' VFX allows you to dodge attacks automatically.

NGC INSIDER KNOWLEDGE

When's it out?
This October in the US, if you want to get the English-language version early. Expect a Xmas release here.

SPIDER-MAN 2

Stan Lee's web-crawler gets the full freedom of NYC…



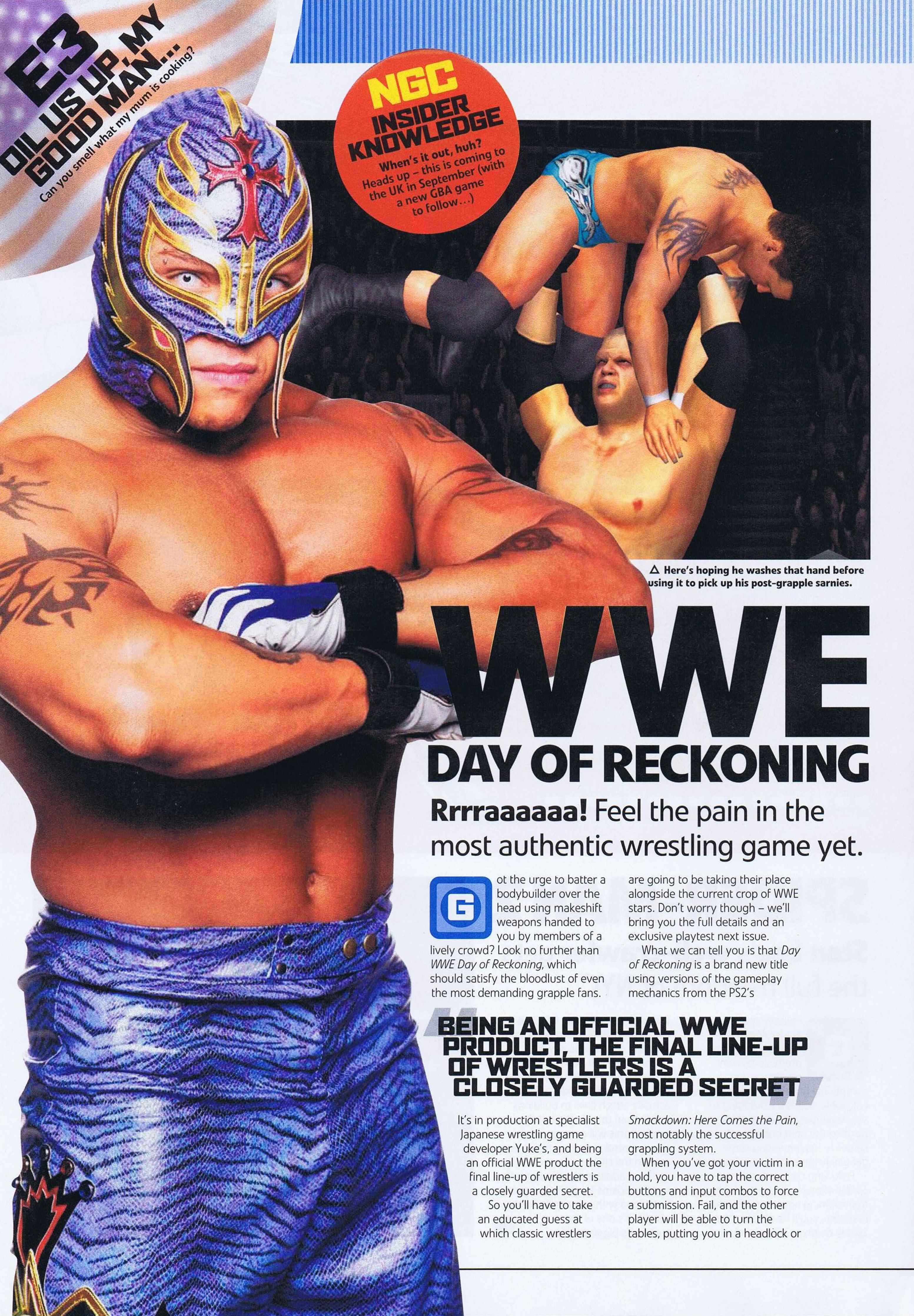
Generally speaking, *Spider-Man* games have always been pretty competent efforts – never exceptional but always perfectly enjoyable. So it's encouraging to see developers Treyarch really pushing the boat out when it comes to implementing some genuinely interesting new features.

Following current fashion, *Spider-Man 2* will take the form of a free-roaming adventure. For the first time, you'll be able to take Spidey down to street level when you please, to interact with the city's inhabitants and choose from a variety of missions at will.

The game will also use a far more (cough) realistic web-slinging system, whereby Spidey will actually attach lines to buildings rather than thin air like last time around. This will give you more direct control over your movement around the city.

These additions rectify our two main criticisms from the last game. Combined with some truly lovely visuals, it's one of the summer's biggest titles.





NGC INSIDER KNOWLEDGE
When's it out, huh? Heads up – this is coming to the UK in September (with a new GBA game to follow...)

△ Here's hoping he washes that hand before using it to pick up his post-grapple sarnies.

WWE DAY OF RECKONING

Rrrraaaaaa! Feel the pain in the most authentic wrestling game yet.

Got the urge to batter a bodybuilder over the head using makeshift weapons handed to you by members of a lively crowd? Look no further than *WWE Day of Reckoning*, which should satisfy the bloodlust of even the most demanding grapple fans.

It's in production at specialist Japanese wrestling game developer Yuke's, and being an official WWE product the final line-up of wrestlers is a closely guarded secret.

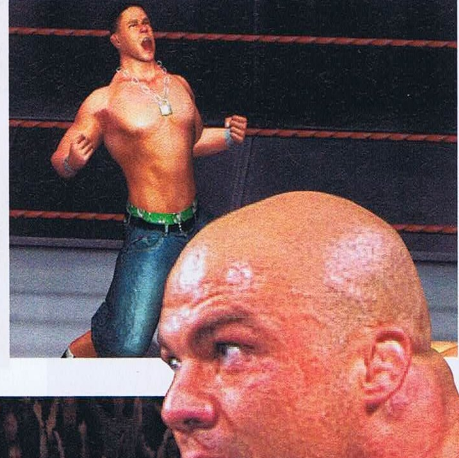
So you'll have to take an educated guess at which classic wrestlers are going to be taking their place alongside the current crop of WWE stars. Don't worry though – we'll bring you the full details and an exclusive playtest next issue.

What we can tell you is that *Day of Reckoning* is a brand new title using versions of the gameplay mechanics from the PS2's *Smackdown: Here Comes the Pain*, most notably the successful grappling system.

> "BEING AN OFFICIAL WWE PRODUCT, THE FINAL LINE-UP OF WRESTLERS IS A CLOSELY GUARDED SECRET"

When you've got your victim in a hold, you have to tap the correct buttons and input combos to force a submission. Fail, and the other player will be able to turn the tables, putting you in a headlock or







△ What they really need to do is introduce some comical fatalities, a bit like *Killer Instinct*.



△ He deserves a smacking simply for those pathetic Robbie Williams tats.





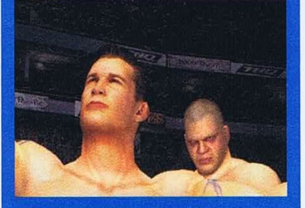


use some other such dastardly – and painful – hold.

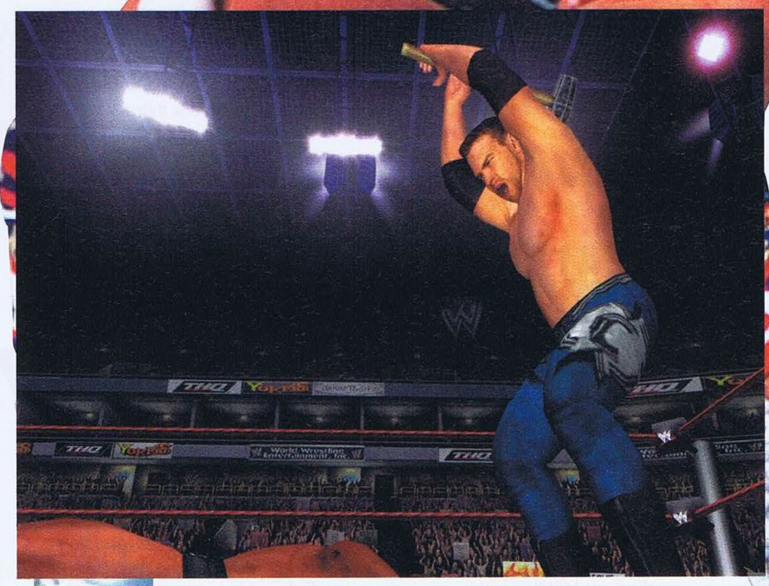
If you prefer to play as a female wrestler you can battle it out in a special underwear match, the aim being to rip the clothes off your opponent. Strangely, female wrestlers don't show the same gruesome facial damage as the men tend to sport after spending ten minutes being smacked in the face with a baseball bat, but at least they get to wander around half-naked.

Apart from the blood, wrestlers develop a sheen of sweat as the fight warms up, giving them an authentically smelly appearance. With dramatically enhanced ring entrances and a wider variety of moves than in any previous wrestling game, *Day of Reckoning* certainly looks like it belongs on Gamecube. Don't miss the world exclusive info and images we've got for you next issue...

BATTER



Some wrestling games can deteriorate into a see-saw bout of weapon-based whacking, with every player seeking out some kind of heavy implement to keep their opponents at arm's length. To bring *Day of Reckoning* back to its hand-to-hand basics, the developers have decided that each weapon should have a very limited lifespan – you can only batter somebody a few times before the stick, chair or plank of wood with nails in it breaks to pieces and vanishes.



△ Seriously, if that sledgehammer lands on his prostrate opponent's head we're talking bits of skull and brain all over the canvas. Go on then...

E3

THREE'S A CROWD

EA know that you probably couldn't stomach another hack-hack-slash Lord of the Rings game, so this time they're going all role-playing in Middle Earth. No sign of any floaty HP or random battles just yet...

NGC INSIDER KNOWLEDGE

When's this out... my precious? Sorry, *my precious* was so last year. The Third Age's release is TBC – we predict a late November release.

△ **Taking on a troll band in the Mines of Moria? Looks like a job for an ageing dwarf and a ginger elf girl. It seems the elves will have magical attacks to call on. We bet they're 'fast' but have 'low strength' too.**

THE LORD OF THE RINGS THE THIRD AGE

Some Orcs are on the pitch – they think it's all over. They are sadly mistaken. And now must die.



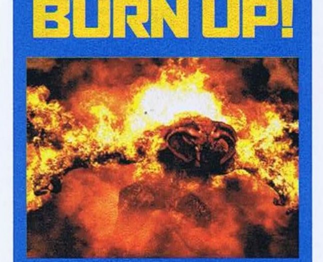
New Line and Peter Jackson's Lord of the Rings Trilogy (for that is how it must be officially referred to from now on – Sauron has spoken) is the gift that just keeps on giving. Maybe it's the fact that they missed out on creating three separate games based on the three films, but EA are set to release another title influenced by Jackson's marathon movies (and J.R.R's books, naturally).

In *The Third Age*, you get to build a party of warriors as you travel through Middle-earth on a route not seen in the films. You'll be playing a new character – sorry Frodo or Aragorn fans – and you fight on the side of everything right 'n' good 'n' proper. But you'll also be able to unlock extra subquests where you're given the chance to don dark armour and fight on the side of Sauron. Excellent. The chance to bury some hobbits.

> **"YOU'LL BE ABLE TO UNLOCK SUBQUESTS WHERE YOU'RE GIVEN THE CHANCE TO FIGHT ON THE SIDE OF SAURON"**

Despite being developed by EA's Redwood Shores studio, the team that made *The Return of the King* such a convincing film license, this is less action-adventure, more RPG. Combat is turn-based, and you get to interact with the members of the Fellowship in 'a unique structure' (what that is, is currently unclear).

BURN UP!



Much of the game sees you visiting locations not seen (or 'seldom glimpsed') in the movies, although you will get to fight alongside the Fellowship at points. You'll have to face the fiery Balrog in the Mines of Moria for instance (above), and defend the fallen city of Osgiliath. We also know that you'll end up trying to *destroy* Helm's Deep, which must be one of the subquests where you get to play on the side of Saruman and Sauron.



△ **Go on EA, let us be a cave troll. We want to crush the stupid dwarf.**

There'll be individual quests to follow, and the chance to get involved with the defining moments of the film trilogy.

Needless to say, you still feel part of the events of the movies thanks to the fantastic realisation of Jackson's vision. Take a glance at the screenshots above to see how good the troll models are. And look at that Balrog to the left. Lovely.

Bringing a classy-looking Lord of the Rings RPG to Gamecube can only be a good thing. There's a GBA version in the works as well, although it'll have some stiff competition on the RPG-saturated hand-held system.

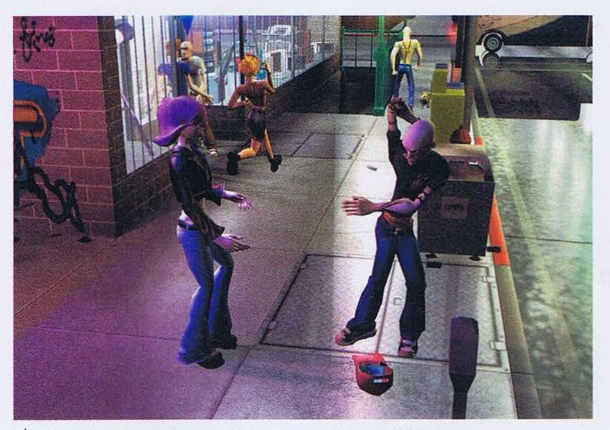
THE URBZ

The Sims hit the big smoke. Party on!

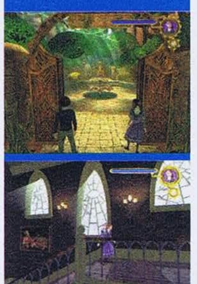


he next instalment in *The Sims* series sees the guinea pig people living in the city – a place where everyone gets measured by their reputation. Using a new graphics engine, EA are dropping you right in the middle of a throbbing urban landscape, with bustling shopping districts, exciting downtown areas, bohemian artist workshops and more. You'll need to forge relationships with other Urbz to increase your rep and gain access to all the districts, jobs and lifestyles in the game. An enhanced character customisation feature allows you to really show off your 'attitude' with signature 'bling' such as tattoos and nose rings and, in a new addition to the successful Sims formula, you'll be able to control your Urbz at every moment – while hard at work and relaxing around town.

The Urbz is due out for Gamecube and Game Boy Advance 'later this year' (which is 26th November in anyone's book…) 



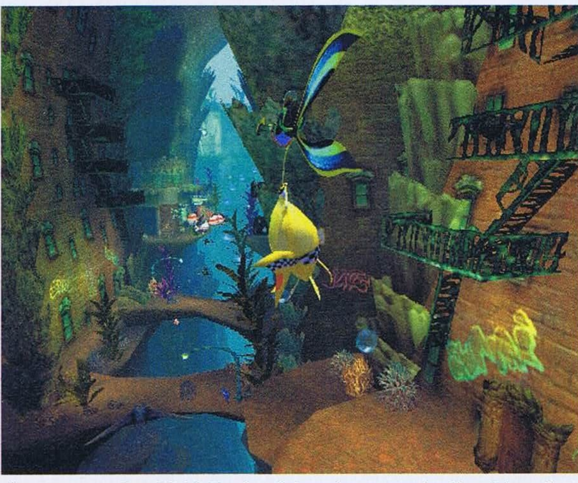
△ **The city never sleeps – though your Urbz will have to.**



LEMONY SNICKET

Sorry, the real name is far too long…

Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events is based on the book series and Christmas movie of the same name. The game – one of those '3D' adventures you've heard so much about – lets you switch between the three Baudelaire orphans, with you having to master each's unique skills in order to solve puzzles and collect items necessary to bring bizarre inventions into life. Sounds a bit like the latest _Harry Potter_ game. Expect it to arrive in December.



△ **See that yellow blob? That's a fish taxi, apparently. Nice. Edge of Reality are coding the GC version. They did the latest *Pitfall* game. Erk.**

SHARK TALE

New Dreamworks movie cruising onto Gamecube…



ikely to contain grittier and saucier themes than family-friendly Finding Nemo, Shark Tale is an animated mafia movie that's literally swimming with the fishes. Voiced by the likes of Will Smith, Robert DeNiro, Martin Scorsese and (yes!) Ziggy Marley, it's the story of Oscar, a bottom feeder who becomes the prime suspect when the son of a shark mob boss is found dead. Activision's game's coming to both GC and GBA and, as is the way with movie licenses these days, mixes film-inspired gameplay with original content. You get to tackle around 25 missions set in the film's locations and environments 'exclusive' to the game. Notice a pattern? Shark Tale, the movie, hits the UK on 15th October. Expect the game then as well. 

LEGEND OF GOLFER

Nintendo take on Tiger Woods at his own game. Which is golf. Mmm.



hile *Mario Golf* hides its considerable depth behind a cartoon veneer of Mushroom Kingdom magic, it's clear how 'seriously' *Legend of Golfer* takes its sport from the off. The, er, *tee* off.

There's an emphasis on customising your own stick-wielder at the start, fiddling with the usual face/hair/gloves combo and going on to nurture their power/stamina/concentration meters.

You'll be able to test out your player's skills, take them out for a practice, enter tournaments and go on to buy items from a shop with your winnings. Neat.

Add to this a four-player mode, a pile of minigames and an entertaining 'GNN' TV sports network-style presentation, and you've got a well-rounded game.

Developed by Seta and published by Nintendo, *LOG* will be out on 17th June in Japan, with the rest of the world, presumably, to follow…



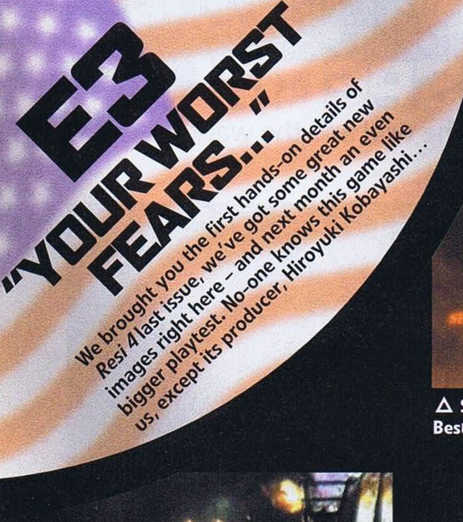


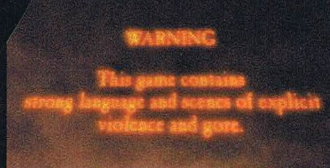




△ **Opting for more of a simulation approach than *Mario Golf*, Legend packs in some far-reaching course views, great weather effects and funky jumpers.**

DID YOU KNOW? Seta are well known for their Japanese series of *Super Real* mahjong games – essentially, strip mahjong played against a group of pretty girls…





△ Strong language and explicit gore? Best turn off, eh? It'll muck your mind.


△ At night, zaps of lightning helpfully light the way. We say helpfully, but...

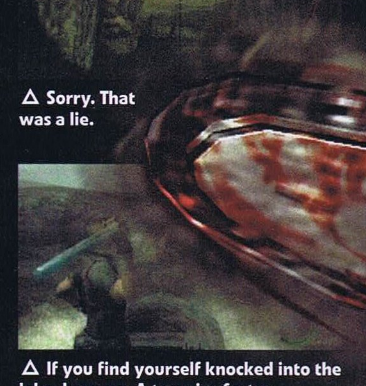

△ ...IT'S TERRIFYING. You get a brief glance up ahead, and then it's gone...


△ Out of the gloom comes a bunch of torch-wielding bumpkins. Rather than blast their faces into sorry bacon, Leon takes the opportunity to give 'em a kiss.


△ Sorry. That was a lie.


△ Notice that Leon's now acquired his jacket. Must be getting a bit parky.


△ The pistol is one of the most accurate weapons. Go! Go! Laser sight!


△ If you find yourself knocked into the lake, hammer A to swim *faster*...


△ Leon brandishes a photo of the US President's abducted daughter.


△ Nerk! Reacting as one should when presented with a snap of a missing person, a beanie-and-braces wearing local takes a flying leap towards Leon. Not able to get a shot out, you find his fingers choking your fat neck. ***Caaan't breeeeaaaathe...***

RESIDENT EVIL 4

Capcom are on top form again. Feed your face with some meaty new chunks of Resi Phwoar (sorry)...


△ Taking refuge in a building, you soon find yourself surrounded. See how Leon blasts through the door and then through that crazed inbred's stupid head.


△ Here comes pappy! The entire village turns out for Kennedy killin'.


△ Now this bit's great. One minute two of 'em are there, the next they're twitching on their backs under a crust of glass, blood and their own stink. Sweeeet shotgun.


△ Not the face! This fella soon grabs you, as you've just run out of ammo!

DID YOU KNOW? As well as Leon Kennedy, there's another, as yet undisclosed playable character in *Resi 4* – someone new to the series.


NGC
INSIDER KNOWLEDGE
When's it out then?
Late this year in the US and Japan – but 2005 in the UK.
How big is it?
10-15 hours big.

Chris Plummer, Executive Producer for *GoldenEye*, spills the beans as **NGC** puts him under interrogation during a pre-E3 visit...



GOLDENEYE ROGUE AGENT

EA release highly sensitive info to us.
And we pass it on to you – *that's* rogue.


kay, let's start at the beginning," says Chris Plummer, Executive Producer for *GoldenEye 2*. We're sitting in EA's colossal San Francisco office. Chris is a busy man right now – he's working on delivering a successor to one of the best games ever created – so we don't have much time. We figure it's best to start with the basics first. Like the title.

"First off, it's not called *GoldenEye 2*," continues Chris. "Its *real* working title is *GoldenEye: Rogue Agent*. It's a first-person shooter based around being the ultimate villain in the Bond universe. That's the concept.

"One of the things that the team loved about the original *GoldenEye* movie was the theme of a 00 agent gone bad. What you knew about Trevelyan was that he was a bad-ass. You knew he was trained by MI6. He was *like* James Bond, he was just as skilled, just as talented – except he turned to the dark side. We are essentially letting you live out that role.

"Bond villains have all the riches, all the women and all the firepower – all things that make the Bond universe great. They don't have any of the restrictions that Bond has."

CAN YOU TELL US HOW THE GAME STARTS?

"In the first mission you're flying into Fort Knox with James Bond, reliving one of the most famous sequences in the film Goldfinger. This is your last mission as an MI6 agent. You're kicked out for being too brutal. You're not MI6 material. It's at this point that you go to work for Goldfinger."

WHY GOLDFINGER?

"He's one of the most famous villains. One thing we're doing very deliberately is tapping into the rich fiction of Bond in a way that no-one has done before. If you think about Bond films, they're not sequential. Bond is the same age in 1963 as he is in 2003. It's a timeless universe much like superhero fiction is. So we have access to all the Bond villains, side-kicks and hideaways like the Volcano Lair and the Spectre board room – all these places in multiple films, where the criminals can, potentially, work with or against each other in their secret organisations. That's exactly what we're going to be tapping into in *Rogue Agent*."

> "WE'RE VERY DELIBERATELY TAPPING INTO THE RICH FICTION OF BOND IN A WAY NO-ONE HAS DONE BEFORE"

SO HOW DOES THIS LINK UP WITH GOLDENEYE?

"As I said, the Bond films aren't sequential, so it's not a 'sequel'. Let me explain the background. Goldfinger is a member of Spectre. The criminal organisation is at war with Dr No's organisation. At the end of the first level, Dr No takes out your character's eye and Goldfinger's scientists replace it for you with a cybernetic eye, which becomes your namesake. It's from here on in that everyone knows and fears you as 'GoldenEye'."

The game then, puts you in charge of 'GoldenEye' – Goldfinger's 'chief agent of destruction' – as you pursue Dr No. A mission that takes you all around the world."

CAN YOU GIVE US AN EXAMPLE OF THE KIND OF PLACE WE'LL BE VISITING?

"Well, in one level you'll be taken to the Hoover Dam. After the original movie, everyone knows that a dam is a cool place to have a shoot out, only this time, being the bad guy, you get the chance

A NEW CHALLENGER

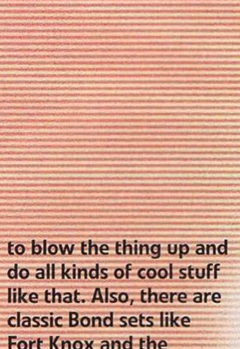
WE ASKED EA: "ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT COMPARISONS TO GOLDENEYE? IT'S A TOUGH ACT TO FOLLOW ISN'T IT?"

"Yeah, which is why we've assembled an all-star team from within EA and from around the world to take on this very important and challenging task, which is to create a game that can live up to the original. We've assembled the team at EA Los Angeles from key members of the *Medal of Honor* team, animators from *Madden* – the best of the best from EA's studios. We've also recruited from around the games industry, lead positions from the games we respect the most. For example, we have the lead AI guy from games like *Halo*, staff from *Counter-Strike* and all the key guys from *Splinter Cell* – although that's a different game to *GoldenEye* in terms of style, we have a lot of respect for their technology and the way they combined that with gameplay.

"Everyone has one thing in common and that's that they're super-passionate about the original *GoldenEye* and they're super-passionate and committed to making a great first-person shooter. We're forgetting about the license for minute and just focusing on that."



DID YOU KNOW? The game has been in development for a year and a half, so it's pretty far along already. We've yet to be allowed access to a playable version though...



to blow the thing up and do all kinds of cool stuff like that. Also, there are classic Bond sets like Fort Knox and the Volcano lair – this is your headquarters in the Bond universe and it's a place you'll get to experience multiple times."

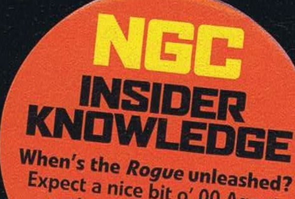
WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER BOND VILLAINS? WILL WE GET TO FIGHT ALONGSIDE OR AGAINST ANY CLASSIC CHARACTERS?

"Yeah, you'll get to fight with and against all kind of villains. You'll get to fight alongside Oddjob in one level, also Onatopp from the original game will make an appearance on the side of Dr No.

"Pussy Galore is in there too. She'll fly you from location to location in the game as your personal pilot. As you rise up through the ranks you'll get to know Pussy better and better..."

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING FOR EVERYONE WHO PLAYED GOLDENEYE WAS GAMEPLAY. HOW DO YOU PLAN TO COMPETE WITH A UNIVERSALLY-ACCLAIMED CLASSIC?

"First and foremost, we're really passionate about the original from a gameplay standpoint. It was a very aggressive 'run and gun'-style shooter and we feel that, with



NGC INSIDER KNOWLEDGE

When's the *Rogue* unleashed? Expect a nice bit o' 00 Agent action by Christmas on Gamecube (it's also due on PS2 and Xbox).

THE TALENT

WE ASKED EA: "WE'VE SEEN AN INCREASING TREND AT EA FOR USING EXCELLENT TALENT TO CREATE YOUR BOND GAMES, INCLUDING REAL CELEBS FOR VOICEOVERS. CAN WE EXPECT A SIMILAR TREATMENT FOR ROGUE AGENT?"

"Oh yes. We've got Kym Barret, who worked on the costumes for The Matrix, for example. We've also brought in Rene Morel for the character models – he's most famous for his work on Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within – and he's probably the best guy in the world in this kind of area. On the music front, we've brought in Paul Oakenfold for the soundtrack. He actually did some work on the last film and we think his style will bring a new edge to the Bond Underworld. Lastly, we've brought in Sir Ken Adams, one of the best production designers in the world, with a couple of Academy Awards to his credit. He's the guy who invented the 'look' of the Bond Universe – Dr No, Goldfinger, Thunderball and You Only Live Twice, they all used his production designs. All these classic sets and some brand-new ones will utilised in the game. There are also a lot of vehicles you can do combat with…"

the technology we have today, we're able to go into much more detail and be far more graphic, and to really recreate and do justice to the original's best elements.

"We're really focused on gameplay. Plot details and sticking to the Bond universe stuff is all very well and good, but at the end of the day, when people hear the word 'GoldenEye' they associate it with great gameplay and a great first-person shooter, and that's what we're really striving to deliver."

WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT 'GREAT GAMEPLAY' WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU MEAN?

"Well, the two most important aspects of our game formula are the multiplayer and our 'Evil AI' system. There are other fundamental core mechanics of the gameplay which I'll talk about later.

"The multiplayer is important to us. We're still playing the original multiplayer and, as a result, we're including more multiplayer maps than campaign maps in the game. Every mode we have in the game can be played in a multiplayer capacity and when there aren't any real people to play alongside you the Evil AI will step in."

AND HOW DOES THAT WORK?

"Evil AI is the centrepiece of the entire game, where all the game systems actually converge. What it stands for is, first, 'emotion'. All the AIs in the game are motivated by raw human emotion. The more you play as a villain, the more you can exploit those emotions to your advantage. Using aggression or composure, for example, you can influence the behaviour of the AI. This is especially important for us because we want the game's more cinematic moments to be born out of the AI rather than from set-pieces, gags or scripted events. So let's say an enemy grabs someone to use as a human shield – it's because of the way the AI works, not because the event is supposed to happen at that particular time.

"Of course, we will have *some* scripted events and set pieces, but most of the game's visceral moments will come through the AI – something which is completely unique. By acting like a villain, by using physical attacks, letting off traps and so on, the enemy will react, they'll use human shields, or they'll attack you aggressively or cautiously. The game experience is dependant on player behaviour.

"Last is the AI's actual intelligence. The AIs are totally aware of both their environment and the player. They'll take cover aggressively and they learn about changes in the environment – for example, if they're going to take cover behind something and you destroy it, they won't use it. Simple stuff like that really affects the game experience."

SO WHAT ABOUT THESE 'CORE MECHANICS' YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT?

"The first thing that we focused on over a year and a half ago was simply aiming and shooting. There are so many first-person shooters out there that just aren't doing this basic, vital aspect properly. We've spent literally months and months and months just concentrating on not just getting this right, but taking it to the next level.

"One thing I loved about *GoldenEye* was the ability to deliver a clean head-shot. This time we're going to add even more precision – allowing you to shoot and destroy a grenade in an enemy's hand, for example.

"The next thing we wanted to implement was close-range attacks. You have the ability to club enemies with your weapon, punch them, grab them, stun them or throw them – so now, even if you're out of ammo you have a genuine alternative in your melee attacks."

ANYTHING ELSE?

"Movement and using the environment is another important aspect we're focusing on. As I said, this will be a 'run and gun'-style game. It's not about sitting in one spot and picking guys off. You can't in this game – if you do, the enemy will pound you. You always have to stay on the move and use cover (which the AI will do too) and the cover can be dynamic, it can be destroyed and it can even be created in some cases.

"We've also developed new kinds of cover – such as distortion. This means that fires, smoke and frosted glass can all be used for cover. Enemies can use these too, and in the case of frosted glass, you can see the enemy, but you can't shoot their grenade or accurately hit them with a headshot. These kinds of things really change the gameplay.

"Finally, interacting with the environment and activating death traps will come into play. In the multiplayer arenas, for example, each one has deathtraps that you or the enemy AI can exploit. Things like shark tanks. Or firing up jet engines to burn foes – the kinds of things that mean the environment can be used as a weapon."

> "YOU CAN'T SIT IN ONE SPOT AND PICK GUYS OFF IN THIS GAME – IF YOU DO, THE ENEMY WILL POUND YOU"

CAN YOU GIVE US ANY INDICATION OF THE KIND OF OBJECTIVES WE'LL BE FACED WITH?

"There are a lot of destruction-orientated missions in there, but also assasination and sabotage. Those are primarily the kinds of objectives you'll have. You're basically going to be taking out anyone who gets in your way. There are a couple of times that you'll be fighting alongside someone – Oddjob, for example – and these all take place in a wide variety of locations, from tropical environments and snow-capped mountains to more urban environments and villain HQs and bases."

WHAT ABOUT GADGETS AND DRIVING SECTIONS? THESE HAVE CERTAINLY BEEN A FOCUS IN THE PAST BOND GAMES, BUT HAVEN'T ALWAYS WORKED THAT WELL…

"There are gadgets in the game but they're not the traditional 'inventory-style' gadgets, instead they're things that are more context sensitive. Also some of your weapons have gadgets, like the ability to create napalm slicks. Stuff like that. The gadgets in *Rogue Agent* are more offensive in nature.

"Also, there won't be any 'driving' sections in the game. We want to try to get away from the 'rail-ride'-style sections that you had in previous Bond games – I really don't like those bits. Instead, when you're, say, riding in the back of a helicopter, you still have complete first-person control.

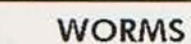
"At the end of the day, our primary goal and focus is to deliver the best FPS experience we can."



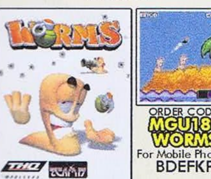


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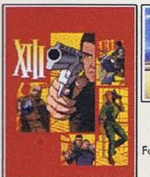


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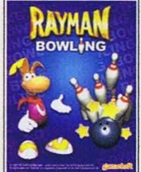
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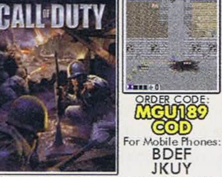
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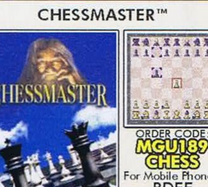
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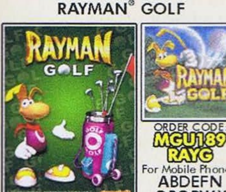
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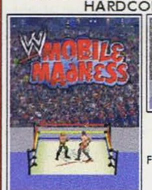
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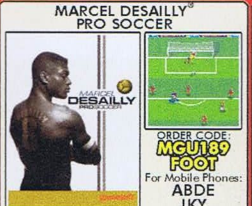
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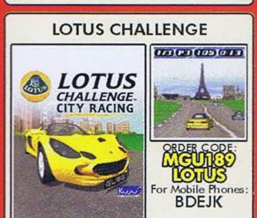
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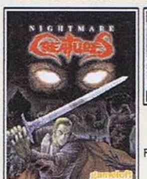
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WHAT DO YOU REALLY WANT TO SEE IN NINTENDO'S CONTINUING PIXIE SAGA?

ZELDA: WIND WAKER 2

Presenting developers with *free* gaming genius:

IDEAS FACTORY

Will it be *Majora's Mask* to *Wind Waker*'s *Ocarina*? Does that make *any* sense?

This was a first for us luddites in the NGC office. About a month ago we appealed for your Zelda ideas via the gamesradar.com website, and after figuring out how to open our email program and learning what "l4m3Rz" are, we found we'd had a great response.

From as far afield as Bristol, your emails demonstrated just how passionate every Nintendo fan is when it comes to Link's continuing saga of kidnap and thievery.

The only other game that ignited such inventiveness for one of our occasional Ideas Factory features was *Perfect Dark*, right at the arse end of 1998. We compiled a top ten list of ideas from your letters (emails hadn't even been invented back then), and Rare put nine of them into the finished game. Then they made *Starfox Adventures*, sold up and went to Microsoft, most likely carrying a bag stuffed with bundles of your ideas for the *Perfect Dark* sequel.

So here's another crack at influencing a hugely anticipated game. Coming from a Japanese company and being quite a long way towards completion already, we have to admit it's fairly unlikely many of these ideas will slip into the game unless somebody at Nintendo thought of them first. But honestly – there are some superb concepts here. If a Zelda game could be made to please all the fans who emailed their suggestions, it would undoubtedly be the greatest thing ever

So as usual, we'll send this stuff over to the developers, keeping our fingers crossed that they can translate it. You never know…

WIND WAKER 2 MUST HAVE...

Six of the most overwhelmingly popular ideas culled from your brains.

DUNGEONS

More of them, please. And make them tougher too – Wind Waker didn't throw up enough proper head-scratchers for you bunch of hardcore gamers.

DRY LAND

You weren't fans of the wide open seas and tiny islands of the previous game, it seems. 'Less water, more land' was by far the most popular request. However, we've a sneaking suspicion that the huge expanses of nothingness in Wind Waker were put there so the loading pauses weren't noticeable. Give the game a detailed overworld and you might have to put up with loading screens between levels, or empty corridors connecting areas like in Metroid *and* Starfox Adventures*.*

CHICKENS

You want chickens, not pigs – although some of you want them both. Perhaps some enhanced menagerie of deadly farmyard beasts could be in the offing for the sequel.

ADULT LINK

Make him grow up – or at least give him the chance to switch between two ages and two separate game worlds again.

TRANSPORT

If Link's going to be travelling by boat again, you want something to do while he's sailing – target practice, for instance. Alternatively you'd prefer to ditch the boat in favour of the horsey charms of Epona, or a hot air balloon.

NO MORE TOON-SHADING

The cartoon graphical style still hasn't received universal acclaim from Zelda fans. Perhaps Ocarina of Time *spoiled us with its semi-realism, but there's always the argument that the cartoon style is closer to what the SNES edition would have looked like from a ground-level perspective. Given that they're supposedly reusing the* Wind Waker *engine, it'll probably stay cartoony. Next issue, we'll pump your mind with all the facts…*



EVOLUTION

See how Zelda has changed over the years – something you'll know all about if you're lucky enough to own the Collector's Edition disc. Which graphical style do you think suits the game best? Wind Waker changed everything, but don't forget Four Swords either. It's a tough call for Nintendo.



ZELDA INTELLIGENCE

27 bright ideas that you reckon would make *Wind Waker 2* rock out, dude...

1 FORESTS
I really would to see a vast forest in *Wind Waker 2*. Imagine how much fun it might be to get lost and stumble into an undiscovered area? The sense of exploration would really give a feeling of adventure and discovery, just like the Great Sea did in the original *Wind Waker*.
Trevor Soh

2 DEMON FIGHTERS
In *Wind Waker* it was mentioned that boys were given blades and garbed in green when they reached a certain age. However, I don't remember seeing any other young demon fighters. You travelled alone in your talking boat and fought your enemies alone.

In the new game I want to meet more potential heroes that have been sent on the same path as Link. You could then team up in battles for a new kind of gameplay.
Thomas Dar

3 FEWER ISLANDS
The islands that took so long to reach were a total kick in the teeth. You'd just spent the best part of 10 or 15 minutes to get there, to find the island was barely big enough to stand on. They needed to be a lot bigger and have more happening on them. I would like there to be fewer islands, so they could be bigger and the gameplay more focused between them.
Adam Noakes

4 OLD LINK
An older Link would be better, although if *WW2* is going to use cartoony graphics then an older Link might not be suitable. However, I feel that a darker/more sinister game (like *Ocarina*) would provide a more compelling atmosphere and would be more beneficial to Nintendo, as it would appeal to a much more varied audience.
Paul Rice





OLD FACES
Link should be able to explore the rest of Hyrule under the sea. Obviously most of it would be in ruins, but new dungeons could have sprung up now that some other evil has made its home there. It would give a good nostalgia hit to veteran Zelda gamers when they see all their favourite locations, and how they fared after 300 years underwater. It'll give a sort of 'nuclear winter' feel to it I guess.
Steve Owen

5 A GAME BOY CLASSIC
It should be a 3D remake of *Link's Awakening*. It makes sense, what with the ending and all. Plus *LA*'s graphics are sort of like a 2D version of *WW*'s graphics, if you follow me. I know what I mean, anyway.
Michael Wilson

6 KOOLOO-LIMPAH?
No Tingle.
Actually, the ability to kill him.
Daniel Entwistle

7 NOSEBAGS
Bring back Epona! I want to be able to ride and gallop along the plains of Hyrule, like in *Ocarina of Time*.
William Owen

8 INJURIES
Link should look a little messed up after fights. He could have wounds and dirt on places on his body (doesn't mean there will be blood in the game!)
Kjetil Berge

9 DARK MOMENTS
The presence of a sinister evil must be illustrated in a proper way. Nintendo have to stop making 'jolly moments with Link' and start to focus on a more serious storyline and design. But of course they should keep the cel-shading. There is nothing wrong with that.
Bjoern Silas Dvergastein

10 TWIN CHARACTERS
How about having a player zap mode like in *Resident Evil 0* where you can either control Link in the future (*Wind Waker*) and Link in the past (*Ocarina of Time*), who both have a major part in each other's fortunes.
Anonymous

11 MULTIPLAYER
A multiplayer mode would be the greatest thing to ever happen to the Zelda series, but don't make it like the way *Donkey Kong 64* ruined their game with a first-person multiplayer. Make it a third person *Smash Bros* brawl where up to four players can play as a different colour Link or a different character in the game. You could pick up weapons and set up the rules like time limit, weapons, stage, and/or AI bots. A multiplayer would help give the game an even larger replay value, the way it made *GoldenEye* so legendary.
Bryan Still

12 NAVI
I'd like to be able to check the 'minor' enemies' names by Z-targeting, just like you could in *Ocarina of Time* and *Majora's Mask*.
Eric Offermans

13 MOLE PEOPLE

Perhaps these mole people are nearly at war with the Gorons over something important like food, and Link must retrieve the leaders of these two tribes who are locked deep within a dungeon, put there by Ganondorf so the races would start a war and kill each other off.

Philip Morris

14 MARILYN MANSON

Link should be a goth with a black tunic and Princess Zelda should have a dominatrix type dress sense. There should be more gothic type buildings in there too.

Steph Calder

15 FISHING

I don't know why Nintendo decided to keep fishing out of a game that is 85% water, but whoever made the decision should probably be fired. Fishing should be in *WW2*.

Anonymous

16 MINI LINKS

Link has two kids – he names them Linkus and Linker. You get to play either Link in the one-player game or the kids in two-player mode.

Mark Thomas

17 MUSICAL YOUTH

I should hope to see a new musical instrument. So far we have had an Ocarina, a Conductor's Baton, Drums, Guitar and Pipes. Maybe we could have a Mandolin!

Josh B'gosh

18 EPICNESS

I would like to see a more epic tale of good vs evil. In the original *Wind Waker* the 'evil' was pretty much focused in certain small areas of the world map, I'd like to see various examples during the game of how the evil is slowly spreading.

Greg Latham

19 PLAYABLE ZELDA

I would like to see Princess Zelda (Tetra) as a playable character as well as Link. It could give an extra edge to the game, even if it's just in a sub-quest. I loved it when in *Paper Mario* you could play as Peach – it added some variety to the game even if the tasks were sometimes silly and had nothing to do with the main story.

I'm sure adding Zelda as a playable character would do the game no harm – maybe she could turn into Sheik and fight like in *Smash Bros*, sneaking around a dungeon finding clues for Link in his next quest or using her disguise to get into places where Link couldn't.

Chi Keen Hui

20 SHIP AHOY

I would also like to sail Tetra's pirate ship and have the ability to board enemy ships (with Tetra's crew of scurvy dogs fighting alongside you).

Kris Agrawal

21 POK-POK-POK

I wanna see the Cuccos come back for *Wind Waker 2* – none of this pork bouncing around and giving you a smacking when you get 'em angry. I wanna see chicken rampages! I'm sure everyone will agree.

Timothy Dallas

22 CANNONS

You should be able to upgrade your ship and stuff, and be able to put huge cannons on it and go for proper sea battles. You should be able to get your own crew together as well.

Patrick Nosurname

23 PIKMIN

I want to see Pikmin make an appearance. Not a big one, just saaaay, see them hiding in the grass and they run away from you when you approach. But you can burn 'em out.

Gordon Allinson

24 HARDNESSES

I would like to see in *Wind Waker 2* either a number of hardnesses or harder over all.

Chris Crooks

25 SWELLING

The ability to change your size – in a crowded room of baddies, Link could balloon up to twice the size of the largest enemy and batter everyone, but when a more stealthy approach is desired he could shrink to rat-size and waltz through the crowd.

Philip Booth

26 REPLAY VALUE

I like Zelda games, but the biggest problem I find is that I never go back to them. We need replayability. There should be unlockable minigames that can be played with 1-4 players, such as pig-herding or horse-racing.

Brian Cotely

27 BASH STREET KID

Give Link a special weapon when he is young – a pea shooter.

AJ, Taz and Jes



WHAT NEXT?

Do you have any ideas for your dream Zelda game that haven't been listed here or revealed at the E3 show? Then send them to the usual address, marking your envelopes 'WInd Waker 2' or email them to ngc@futurenet.co.uk using 'Wind Waker 2' in the subject line. If we get enough good ones we'll print them in a couple of months.



NGC THE VERDICT YOU DESERVE!

REVIEWS



PHANTASY STAR ONLINE III C.A.R.D. REVOLUTION

Familiar series, whole new style of gameplay. Deal yourself in. P54

WARNING! SPOILERS AHOY! OUR REVIEWS CONTAIN SENSITIVE INFO!



SAMURAI JACK THE SHADOW OF AKU

The cartoon hero fails to make the transfer to games… P66



WORLD RACING

Proves the old saying "ye cannae change the laws of physics" *totally* wrong… P60

GBA REVIEWS…

HOW IT WORKS...

Our reviews are the most comprehensive on Earth. We devote more pages to the games you want to know about, and give you loads of detail. We don't rest until we've played a game enough to pinpoint ALL of its strengths and weaknesses, and be able to deliver the most honest, no-nonsense verdicts around.





SERIOUS SAM NEXT ENCOUNTER

It's Sam's first GC encounter – but you'll have such a good time, you'll forgive the delay. P62

OUR SCORING SYSTEM

0-24
■ Crushingly awful, massively dull. Rest assured, this game is crud.

25-49
■ A disappointing title, stashed with nasty faults and likely to be short on any quality.

50-74
■ Some great bits, some not-so-great bits. Decent but definitely problems.

75-89
■ Great fun, brilliantly programmed at times, but probably flawed.

90+
■ Rarely awarded, a 90+ is essential. Buy with confidence.

NGC STAR GAME

THE SCORE BAR

■ The verdict explained for you...

PROS AND CONS
Because we think it's important to provide you with balanced reviews, we'll sum up the game simply with some quick plus and minus points.

IF YOU LIKE THIS...
Not all games are good (unsurprisingly) – so you'll be wanting to know what the alternative is. We'll provide suitable suggestions here.

VISUALS AND SOUNDS
Gamecube sends PS2 packing. Do the visuals and sounds show this?

MASTERY
How well does the game make use of the Gamecube's startling hardware?

LIFESPAN
Will it last you a lifetime or a couple of minutes? This is where you'll find out for sure…

VERDICT
We don't throw scores around – we give a game what it deserves. Here you will find the definitive verdict as to whether you should bother purchasing a game.


- Warmer.
- Fit people wear skimpier clothes.
- Have fun outside.


- Hot in the office.
- Too many tourists.
- Unfit people wear skimpier clothes.

IF YOU LIKE THIS...
Autumn Harvestcom
NGC/09, 80%
Cooler and darker than its prequel, but enlived by Halloween and Bonfire Night.



8 VISUALS
Blue skies, blue seas and lots of girls in miniskirts. Yes!

7 SOUNDS
Bands in the street, birdsong, and late-night goings-on.

10 MASTERY
We love *Summer*. It's got everything we like. Except snow.

3 LIFESPAN
Lasts a few months, but there's one every year. Is it from EA?

VERDICT
Get us that double-decker bus, we want to be like Cliff Richard and have a wild and crazy hot season. Yes.

NGC 84

MEET THE NGC TEAM

We're all off to the sunny States on our annual E3 ~~holiday~~ work trip.


MARCUS
Incapable of working since Skinny Puppy released a new album, preferring to rub his face with blood and make 'bleep! blork!' noises.


PAUL
Despite the fact that we point out the absurdity of his surf-hippy ways, when the summer comes those waves look really good.


KITTSY
'Working' at E3 as you read this. Which means playing games, drinking lots of free beer and eyeing up the booth babes.


GERAINT
Actually, he's chained to his desk, writing furiously. We couldn't afford an infinite number of chimps, so had to settle for him.


MIM
Sunshine? Sun… shine? The furrowed brow and bewildered expression prove she really has no idea what we're on about.

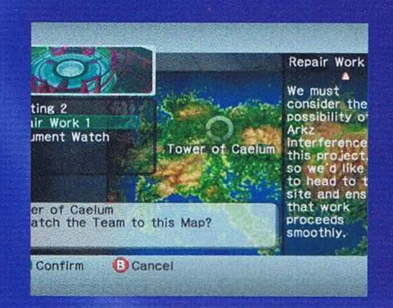

EFFY
Still complaining that it's too cold. The only man in England to be wearing an Arran cardie in June. And it's worn over a jumper.

"There's too much to take in all at once"



INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	SEGA
DEVELOPER	SONIC TEAM
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
PLAYERS	1-4
MEM. CARD PAGES	28
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	NO
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£40





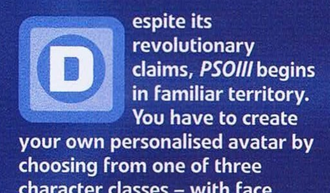




△ Confused? You will be, but stick with it, because underneath it all is a solidly designed strategy game.

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE III
C.A.R.D. REVOLUTION

Sega deal us another social-life destroying hand. But it's not quite as innovative as they'd have you believe…



Despite its revolutionary claims, *PSOIII* begins in familiar territory. You have to create your own personalised avatar by choosing from one of three character classes – with face, costume, hair and proportion options identical to the previous instalment. Get past that, though, and the similarities to its action-RPG predecessors ends.

For the latest *Phantasy Star Online*, Sonic Team have created an entirely different breed of game – one that revolves around card collecting, deck building, turn-based combat and lots of forward thinking.

Initially, everything seems impenetrable. It feels like there's too much to take in all at once. You have banks of cards that display numbers, conditions, rules of use, symbols and so on. If you're brave enough to jump straight into your first battle things can be even more overwhelming. Dice roll, cards stretch out in rows, numbers flit around the screen – disappearing almost as quickly as they arrive – while that robotic announcer introduces 'phases' that initially you're completely unable to make sense of.

> "REVOLVES AROUND CARD COLLECTING, DECK BUILDING AND TURN-BASED COMBAT"

The on-screen chaos frightens almost as much as it confuses – more so if you're not familiar with the *Phantasy Star* universe – and it will inevitably take a while to filter through your brain. Thankfully the opening menu screen offers a very handy step-by-step tutorial to take the edge off the proceedings. Once you think you've got the gist of what's going on you'll need to select a mode to play in.

Online mode lets you log on to Sega's servers and enter a lobby



LICENCE TO KILL

If you already have PSOI and II, you'll be pleased to hear that you can use the same Hunter's Licence to play both games – so you don't have to fork out yet another six quid month after month. You can even share the same online lobbies so you can meet your mates.

DID YOU KNOW? *PSI* (Master System) and *PSII* and *III* (Mega Drive) are, despite being pretty dated these days, quality RPGs. You can get all three for GBA as *Phantasy Star Collection*.

"Delightfully drawn comic-style storyboards"

PLAY YOUR CARDS RIGHT

Don't know what is going on? Let us explain…



The first phase of a turn requires you to 'roll the dice'. The higher number will dictate how many action points you have to spend during the duration of your turn.



Next is the 'Set' phase. You choose cards from your hand of five to use in that turn. You can equip monsters, weapons or items for use. Each has a point cost.



'Move' lets you manoeuvre your monsters or character (depending on whether you're playing Arkz or Heroes) into an attacking position. Again, each square costs a point.



Next up is 'Action', where you can use your remaining points to attack the enemy using the cards you equipped in the set phase. It's now that you deal damage.



Even when it's the opponent's turn, if you can have a defensive card in your hand along with action points remaining, you can utilise cards such as 'Dodge' to limit damage.

Also, a single character can only use 8 Action Points at most to equip or summon.

△ **Before we watched this tutorial, our brains were going critical. Exploding out through our ears. Fact.**

where you can set up solo or team battles, enter tournaments or just socialise with other users.

Offline mode throws up two options: Free Battle, where you can play against the computer or with up to four friends in a one off scrap; and the strictly single-player Story mode where you'll most likely want to start.

One of the main criticisms of the first instalment was the near total lack of plot. True, elements of a meagre storyline were available if you concentrated on activating small pods in each level, but essentially that was it.

This time around things are entirely different. On starting Story mode, you're presented with a choice of two conflicting teams. the Arkz and Herosides.

A CARD DAY'S NIGHT

Each side has its own perspective on the events that follow *PSO Episodes I* and *II*, and these are conveyed through some delightfully drawn comic-style storyboards. The two sides also serve a more important purpose – which one you choose affects your strategy and overall playing styles.

> **"WHICH SIDE YOU CHOOSE AFFECTS YOUR STRATEGY AND PLAYING STYLE"**

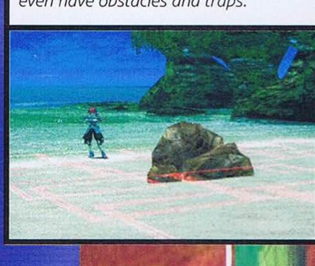
The Arkz characters that you command on the battlefield use monster cards. These are creatures that you can deploy on the field to attack your enemy. The main weakness of this team is that the character can be attacked directly and his or her



DID YOU KNOW? Long-standing rumour says that Sonic Team are planning a PSO RPG, but recent rumblings from Japan suggest 'something big' will happen to the online series.



PLAYING FIELD
Divided up into squares, the shapes of the arenas differ greatly from simple rectangles to arenas that force the action into bottlenecks. Some of them even have obstacles and traps.



THE ENEMY
You win battles by defeating the enemy. In the case of Heroside, you have to destroy their weapons and items first. Arkz, however, are vulnerable from the outset, with the monsters as their defence.



YOUR HAND
You can hold five cards at a time. From these you equip weapons and items or deploy monsters. At the end of a turn, you can discard cards to improve your current hand for the next turn.



CARD DATA
There are hundreds of cards to get to grips with, each with its own unique traits and rules. You can call up a window to explain the ins and outs of a specific card at any time. Which is nice.





△ Character creation is familiar. These 'card' things are not.





△ You even encounter one-on-one guardian battles. Ooosh!



△ Guns. Robot Rangers. Oh.

subsequent death means the loss of the battle.

Balancing this is the Heroside character list. Heroside characters, unable to deploy monsters, have to battle on their own and can quickly become overwhelmed by the Arkz' monster cards. To make up for this weakness, they can equip weapon and item cards which provide their main line of defence and attack. These weapons and item cards must be destroyed before the main character becomes vulnerable.

Both sides are delicately balanced and their different strengths and weaknesses require not only a dramatic change in strategy from other *PSOs*, but also a lot of forward-thinking and consideration in order to play effectively.

The strategies in *PSOIII* work on two levels when it comes to battling. First and foremost is deck creation. As you win or lose battles, you earn new cards to add to your collection. These consist of attack and defensive moves, status affecting cards that can paralyse opponents and the like, while other cards can be included for strengthening or weakening attacks, as well as improving weapon range.

Before you enter a battle, you have to pick out a maximum of 30 cards – a limit that brings about your first strategic dilemma. Do you go for all out attack? Concentrate on magic use? Do you use heavy-hitting cards for the latter stages of a battle or juggle all card types to cover every eventuality?



STORY BOARD
Some of the artwork in the Story mode's intermissions is beautiful, and helps to immerse you in the game world far more than the graphics in its predecessor. Unfortunately, it means the ability to play co-op in this part of the game has had to be abandoned…

ROLL PLAY
The second level of strategy is concerned with the battles themselves. Dice rolls (which dictate how much activity you can indulge in on any given turn), the order in which your deck presents itself in your hand and how you position yourself or your monsters on the field force you to make constant decisions about how to act. It's not easy, as one mistake can win or lose a battle, but watching your carefully-laid plans slowly unfold into victory – especially against an online human opponent – is a richly rewarding experience. And

"It all looks painfully dated"

BEAST MASTER

Like Siegfried and Roy… except, not.



The Arkz are a splinter group from the old Pioneer 2 colony. They're branded as terrorists by the government and are using C.A.R.D. technology to summon monsters.



The monsters you can summon are all but identical to the ones you find in PSOI and II, including the machines from the mines. Powerful monsters cost more action points.



As, theoretically, you can be harmed directly by your enemy right from the start, you need to use your monsters either to create a defensive wall around you or…



…use them to 'rush' the enemy, surrounding them so their movement is hampered, or overwhelming them so you can bust through their weapon cards.



△ You need to constantly configure decks for…



△ …all the characters you unlock. This can be…



△ …done at the handy kiosk at your team's HQ.



△ Magic attacks are all present and correct.



△ Heroside characters can equip weapons.



△ The arenas aren't particularly great.

it's an experience that isn't available to you anywhere else on Gamecube.

Unfortunately, as much as you'll grow to love it, *PSOIII* is not without its problems. First of those is the presentation. It's ropy to say the least. Models have been reused left, right and centre, the locations and arenas, (with just a couple of exceptions) are universally dull in design and, ultimately, it all looks painfully dated. Which it is considering that, visually, it hasn't really changed since its Dreamcast iteration.

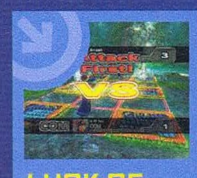
Granted, you could argue that with a game like this, presentation doesn't really matter at the end of the day. And yes, it does help keep this game in line with *Episodes I* and *II*, but we can't help but feel that a little more effort to spruce things up wouldn't have gone amiss.

Ultimately, though, it's the game's potential appeal that is its biggest achilles heal. *PSOI* and *II* were fine for newcomers to the Phantasy Star universe but *PSOIII*, despite having a strong single-player mode, isn't exactly welcoming to people unfamiliar with the previous games and so most of the attention it gets will come from those of us who are already well and truly in love with the online experience.

What's more, given that the game's longevity will come from the online tournaments and social aspect we'd say that it's imperative that you're already online with *PSOI* and *II* if you want to get the most out of this. If you are, then *yes*, rush out and pick up a copy, you won't regret it. If not, then we suggest you pick up *PSOI* and *II* before committing to this.

GERAINT EVANS

> "ISN'T EXACTLY WELCOMING TO PEOPLE UNFAMILIAR WITH THE PREVIOUS GAMES"

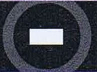


LUCK OF THE DRAW

In PSOIII the luck factor of any given battle is higher than in most card games. When you roll the dice you're awarded a set of action points that you can spend for your turn. If, for example, you keep rolling pitifully, it means you're severely limited to what you can do in battle. Frustrating.



- Competitive and compulsive online.
- A strategic game with huge depth.



- Dodgy presentation.
- Irritating luck factor.
- Insanely time consuming.



Lost Kingdoms
Activision
NGC/90 86%
A card-based RPG with a stronger single-player mode and action elements.





Reuses the same models as the GC/DC games. Lazy.



A few excellent tunes, but mostly forgettable stuff.



Poor visuals, but card design and depth of play is superb.



Story mode will last you 50-odd hours, Online for hundreds.

VERDICT

Possibly the best all-out strategy game on GC, while online play makes it uniquely rewarding and compelling.





"Undeniably rank"



STATS & THAT
Up to five computer men to race, or you can play against a mate.

LANDSCAPE
Go anywhere you like, when you find a gap in the highly dangerous little kerb around the roadside. Or you can just try blasting right over it.

YOUR CAR
There are more than 100, but you'll have a hard time telling some of them apart – many are just slightly different models of the same thing.

CUSTOMISED
Pick your driver, car colour (from a selection of four) and number plate. We call our bloke Go-sen, and he's suitably robotic. His arms never move to turn the wheel.



PUBLISHER	TDK
DEVELOPER	SYNETIC
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
PLAYERS	1-2
MEM. CARD PAGES	15
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	NO
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£20



WORLD RACING

It's the go-anywhere racer that evokes warm memories of the marvellous *Carmageddon 64*. A rare treat indeed…



What the… Wasn't this out weeks ago? Well yes it was, and normally we'd have left it well alone – we weren't sent a review copy at the time, and we suspected it might not be all that brilliant anyway.

But then Jenson Button did rather well in the Grand Prix, so we thought we might as well track down the elusive *World Racing* and see what all the fuss wasn't about.

First of all, the good news – it's only £20, which is a commendably modest price for a game. You might even find it with a few quid knocked off, making it almost an impulse purchase.

The bad news – if this is what a £20 game is like, bring back the days of £60 N64 cartridges.

It's about as well-built as a Trabant, if you can remember those creaky East German jalopies, which is odd considering all the 100+ vehicle variants are from Mercedes. It's full of the kind of glitches that would probably have been picked up at the playtesting stage in a full-price product. No wonder the Mercedes Benz part has been dropped from the title for the British release.

"IF THIS IS WHAT A £20 GAME IS LIKE, BRING BACK THE DAYS OF £60 N64 CARTS"

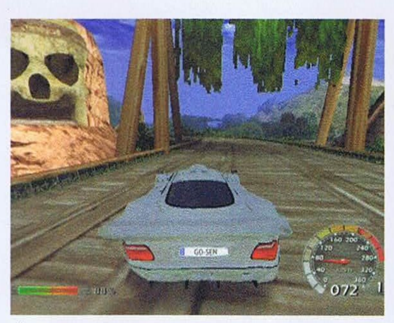


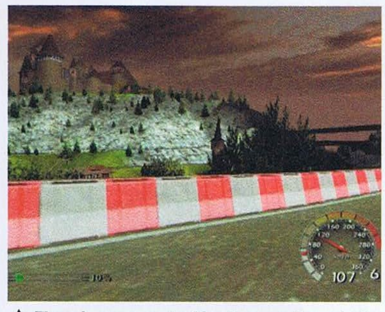
EASY RIDER
The courses are set around huge landscapes, and you can leave the prescribed track at any time to have a bit of an explore. Nice idea, but it leads to all sorts of stuck-in-the-scenery problems, hideous graphical glitches and other predictable difficulties.

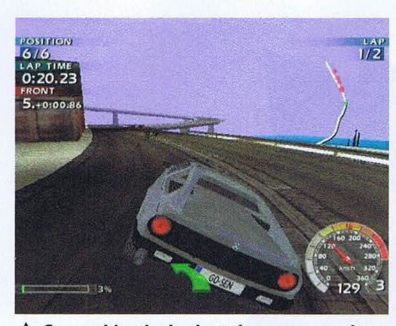
LAWS OF PHYSICS

Drive up a slope and the sky mysteriously vanishes, to be replaced by a solid block of pink, blue or grey. Your car can pass right through half of the trackside objects – trees, rocks and even parked helicopters are just ghostly projections, but try driving over a 50cm post sticking out of the floor and you'll stop dead.

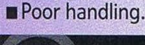
To be fair, we have seen some amazing things in the game, not least the time an opponent in a 4x4 repeatedly attempted to mount a convertible that was stuck on an awkward polygon in an Alpine


△ This is Mexico, in case you were wondering. Really, this is what it looks like.


△ There's some sort of kerb around most of the roads. Hit it at speed to blast right over.


△ Go-sen hits the kerb at the wrong angle and tries a bit of two-wheeled 007 stuff.

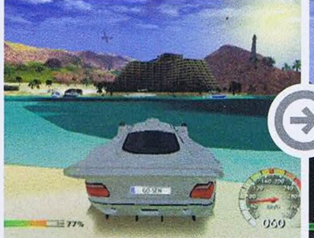

- Glitchy.
- Slow.
- Rough graphics.
- Poor handling.



- See above.

OH DEAR

We fancied exploring the game's revolutionary free-roaming levels, so we went down to Mexico and drove on the beach for a while. Then we drove into the sea. It reminded us of Carmageddon 64. Sigh…





IF YOU LIKE THIS...

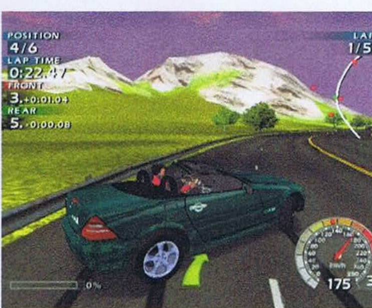
R: Racing Evolution
Namco
NGC/90 77%
Hefty driving sim with better graphics and a free copy of *Pac Man Vs.*





△ Dodgy physics here. Dodgy everything. If you hit a parked car just right it's possible to send it flying hundreds of feet into the air until it slams into a building and slides back to street level.


△ Lots of fun with parked cars here.


△ Slide for style points. Very nice.

2 VISUALS
Sometimes the sky disappears. What's all that about then?

2 SOUNDS
Doesn't sound especially like a proper car engine.

1 MASTERY
Not even remotely what we expect from a Gamecube.

3 LIFESPAN
Barely interesting enough to be worth completing.

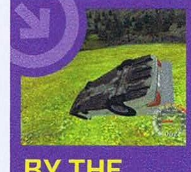
tunnel. We even drove out into the Japanese nuclear wastelands once, and we can confirm the stories are true – the entire world really does vanish and turn black if you drive too fast round there.

STINKER!

This is a rank game. It's huge, with multiple routes around the free-roaming locations making up more than 100 tracks, but it's still undeniably rank.

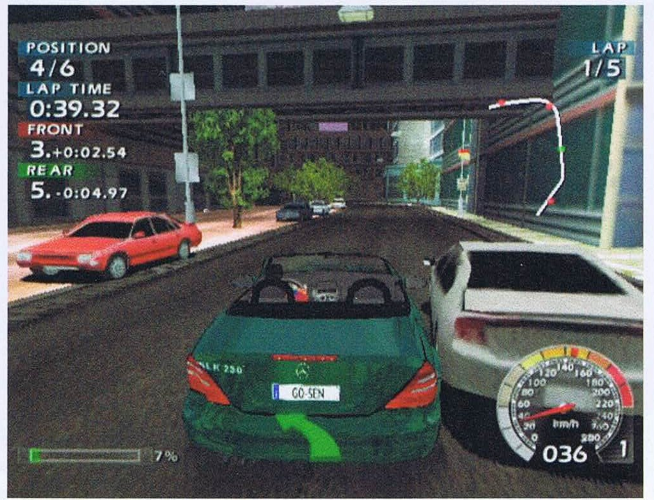
If you're after a good bit of budget gaming, check out *Serious Sam*. Otherwise, put that £20 towards something that's actually worth your hard-earned cash. Bank it, and you might have earned enough interest to get *Wind Waker 2* by the time that comes out…

MARTIN KITTS



BY THE BOOK

Because you can cut corners and all that, you'll have an unfair advantage over the computer drivers. That's why you get penalised for being a roadhog, with style points deducted and your stats affected if you don't stick to the proper route. But who cares anyway?



△ It's tense stuff when buildings pop up right in front of you.

VERDICT

Unremarkable in every single way, except for when the cars pause mid-race and the sky vanishes.





"Forty levels of carnage with hardly a pause for breath"



△ As far as comedy first-person shooters are concerned, *Serious Sam* is where it's at. You'll have a whale of a time. Until you get bored by the relentless blasting.

INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	TAKE 2
DEVELOPER	CLIMAX
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
PLAYERS	1-4
MEM. CARD PAGES	3
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	YES
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£20!









△ The game follows a fairly set routine – you'll find lots of incidences of being locked in a room until you've killed everything.

SERIOUS SAM NEXT ENCOUNTER

Sadly not starring chubby verge-trimmer Samwise Gamgee. But you can't have everything, eh?



On a world where we've been blessed with the thoughtful complexity of a game like *Metroid Prime*, *Serious Sam* is a Neanderthal, bashing rocks together and cowering in a cave. It's a beetle-browed simpleton; a fossil carbon-dated to 5BG (Before *GoldenEye*). *Serious Sam* is stupid and simple and takes almost no notice of the evolutionary leaps made by the first-person shooter over the last decade. It is thoroughly old-fashioned, and could not be more so if it wore a stovepipe hat, rode a Penny Farthing and muttered disapprovingly about suffragettes. But it's a *huge* amount of fun.

Forget stealth and fancy gadgets that let you see through walls or control spider-mines. There's none of that nonsense here, just good, old-fashioned violence and belief-beggaringly big hordes of cannon fodder. *Serious Sam* is *Doom* minus the gothic hell-trappings and plus a silly big dayglo hat and deely boppers. It's bright and colourful and cartoonish, and expects you to revel in the wholesale slaughter of a dizzying array of daft monsters. It's *tremendous*.

"SERIOUS SAM IS DOOM MINUS THE GOTHIC HELL-TRAPPINGS AND PLUS A BIG DAYGLO HAT"

A console-specific and totally new addition to a series of well-regarded PC shooters, *Serious Sam* is, as you'll probably have been told a thousand times already, not serious at all. The tissue-thin plot sees Sam flung back through three time periods (ancient Rome, Egypt and Atlantis) in order to stop the machinations of the evil Mental. Cue 40 levels of carnage with hardly a pause for breath. And that really is about it. It's as basic as a first-person shooter can be.

But it's all done with such gusto that it's like a breath of fresh air. There's obviously a certain amount of running through corridors but



MEDALLION MAN

Playing on the Easy difficulty is perhaps the best start for the lone player, but you don't earn medals for your high scores. Why would you want to earn medals? Because they unlock the final ten levels of the game – so if you want to see everything, hit the higher difficulty settings.

DID YOU KNOW? As well as this GC version of *Serious Sam: Next Encounter*, there's an imminent GBA version too, which promisingly offers four-player deathmatch options.

A DAY IN THE LIFE...

...Of Serious Sam. Here's what to expect when you play the first world.



Things start easily – you're in an arena with a horde of Tweedle Dum Dums. Mow 'em down and prepare for the next wave, which brings on some new meanies.



Most of the time puzzles require you to collect something. This early example requires you to fetch two Roman Coins – guarded by gangs of monsters – to open a door.



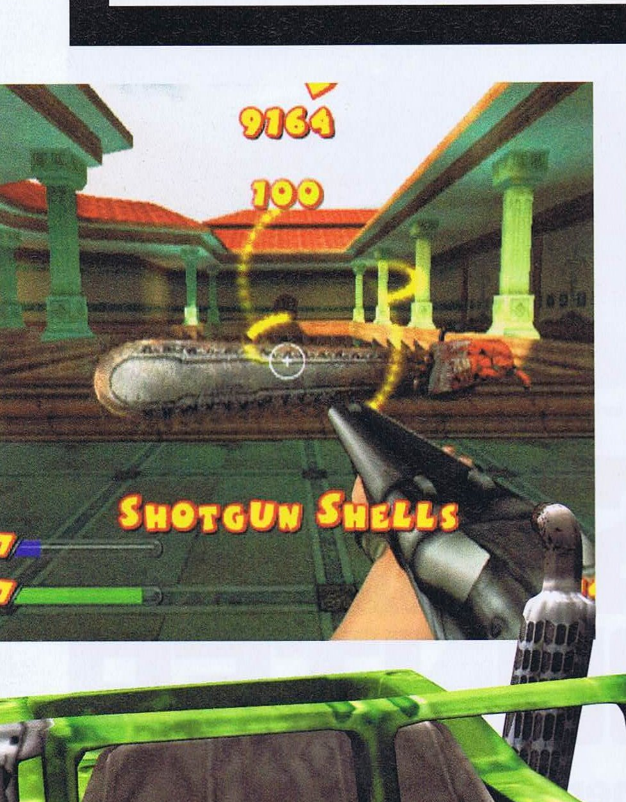
There are Doom-esque secrets. Mostly they tend to warp you to a secret goodie-filled room – jump in these wine vats and trudge towards the middle for just such a surprise.



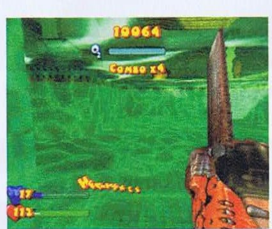
Things settle into a routine. Once you've defeated one wave of monsters, another appears. The action is enjoyable, but it won't hold your interest in the long term.



Nevertheless, there are loads of hooks to keep you playing, from odd items like laughing gas to different ammo types, and all add an extra wrinkle to the combat.







△ **Ah, the chainsaw. It's very choppy and slicey indeed.**



△ **Many of the environments are pleasingly wide-open and large, and often filled with terrain of differing heights. Nice and varied.**



△ **You get rewards for killing waves of horrible monsters.**



△ **The vehicles are great fun and a fine addition to the game.**



there's also a vast selection of wide-open levels, giving you more room to run and fewer places to run to, and an immense feeling of satisfaction as you sweep your chain gun over the horizon, mincing swarms of little green Tweedle Dum Dums.

AI is practically nonexistent – enemies simply run at you or stand and shoot. But just like in *Doom*, original developers Croteam and the guys at Climax (who coded the Gamecube version) know that the lack of smarts doesn't matter when you've got 20 monsters of varying types all coming towards you. Quantity is the key, and drama is provided as you furiously back-pedal and circle-strafe, desperate to stay alive and finish off the horrible screaming kamikaze soldiers that have no heads and bombs for hands. It's quite intense.

And ridiculous. The monsters in the game are seemingly designed for absurdity's sake, but they make *Serious Sam* a game chock full of surreality, and it's a real change from the legions of grey, industrial near-future shooters we're so often offered. Just like Nintendo's own emphasis on primary colours and charmingly artificial reality, *Serious*

SERIOUS SAM: NEXT ENCOUNTER

Deadly, but not serious

MINCEMEAT

There's a wide selection of weapons, from twin pistols and Uzis to the rocket launcher. Variety is derived from the different ammo types, such as heat seeking and ricochet.

ROUGH BEASTS

There's an absurd selection of monsters, all of them very silly indeed, and a touch of Z brings up biography-style files on everything you encounter, which is an entertaining touch.

TWO TO TANGO

Two people can tackle the single-player game via the co-op mode. It's this that's kept us coming back to Sam. Remember to turn 'Friendly Fire' off…

WORLD OF WAR

The 40 levels are spread over three distinct areas. The final location, Atlantis, sports some splendidly mad bits, such as an M.C. Escher-esque tower where you can walk on every surface. Erk!



△ That's a big old bull, eh? Yes.

△ We like *Serious Sam* a lot.



△ (Sings) The hills are alive…



△ These flying gits are irksome.

Sam is over-the-top and garish, and it works all the better for it.

It's far from perfect, of course. The constant action can get wearing over extended periods, so the game's best played in short bursts. An hour's shooting brings the one-dimensional gameplay to the fore, but for a fast blast it's ace.

Despite the nutty monsters, the game looks basic. Animation is simple, limited and awkward and the environments are functional at best, making up in colour-clashing enthusiasm what they lack in finesse. But it all plays a part in getting the game to run smoothly, even when the game is at its most frantic – coupled with the well-implemented control system (it's arguably more robust than *TimeSplitters 2's*) there really is no obstacle to killing monsters. It's as transparent and fast-moving as it needs to be, and that's quite a feat.

"AN HOUR'S SHOOTING BRINGS THE ONE-DIMENSIONAL GAMEPLAY TO THE FORE"

Perhaps the jewel in the crown of this console-exclusive *Sam* is the co-operative mode. Two players can take on the single-player game together and it still runs at a super-smooth rate. Smart design decisions – there's enough power-uppery for both players, so it's impossible to leave your mate in the lurch by hoovering all the freebies up – means that this plays wonderfully, and the inevitable weariness caused by the constant shooting is alleviated when there's a friend to share the fun with. Four-player Deathmatch mode rounds things off, and again, it's smoothly done.

Serious Sam is something of a triumph, then. Throw in some vehicles (including a combine harvester), differing ammo types and daft pick-ups (Serious Skates are our favourite), and the final deal-clinching fact that this costs a mere £20, and you've got a game that really is a treat. Seriously.

JES BICKHAM



VIGILANTE GREAT

Taking a cue from Halo on Xbox, you get to drive the occasional vehicle in Next Encounter. They're new to the Serious Sam experience, and a lot of fun indeed. The first one you get is a jeep which is fantastic for haring around the spaces of Ancient Rome. Rocket launchers help too!



- Superb shooting.
- Excellent co-op mode.
- Only £20!



- Mindless.
- Looks primitive.
- Gets tiresome.
- One-dimensional.



IF YOU LIKE THIS…

TimeSplitters 2
Eidos
NGC/72 92%
More dimensions than the TARDIS. The current daddy of console FPSs.



6 VISUALS

Garish and simple, but has charm and some sweet effects.



6 SOUNDS

Incessant speed-metal nonsense, but great effects.

7 MASTERY

Pushes the envelope only because it's so smooth and quick.

7 LIFESPAN

You might tire before the end. With over 40 levels this isn't small.

VERDICT

Intense from the first second to the final hour, this is back-to-basics shooting. Cheap, cheerful and fun.

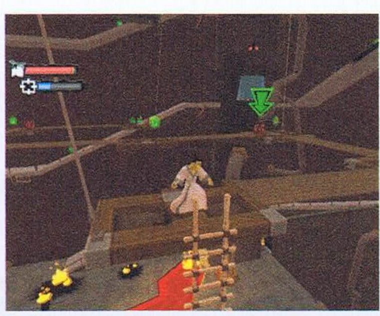




DID YOU KNOW? *Serious Sam* was released on PC in 2001, swiftly followed by a sequel. Both were released on Xbox last year but *Next Encounter* is all-new and GC and PS2-specific.

"Lumpen characters and backdrops"


Δ Jack splish-sploshes through the water, looking for more robots to chop up.


Δ A poor man's *Prince of Persia*, where you keep slipping off ledges and all that.


Δ Jack marches purposefully through the woods, looking for more robots to chop up.

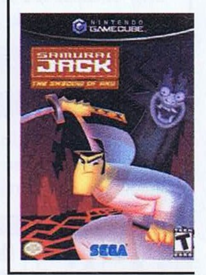

Δ Rescuing a villager who looks a bit like an alien version of Kermit.



Δ Doing a bit of archery with Jack's magic bow – *feel the excitement!*

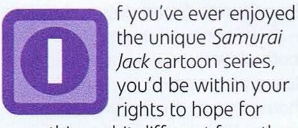
INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	SEGA
DEVELOPER	ADRENIUM
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
PLAYERS	1
MEM. CARD PAGES	35
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	NO
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£40



SAMURAI JACK THE SHADOW OF AKU

Television's time-travelling white samurai slashes his way onto Gamecube, but it's a bit of a weedy effort…



If you've ever enjoyed the unique *Samurai Jack* cartoon series, you'd be within your rights to hope for something a bit different from the first *Samurai Jack* console game.

Well, you can hope all you want, but all you're actually going to get is a standard 3D platformer with rudimentary fighting elements and a lifespan of roughly one afternoon.

It doesn't even look all that much like the cartoon – the developer's attempt at adding an extra dimension to the stylised 2D artwork has only resulted in lumpen characters and backdrops that have an unattractive, unfinished appearance.

Just like on the telly, Jack's mission is to defeat arch bad dude Aku and rescue any good guys he chances upon along the way.

In the game, this amounts to an incredible amount of button-bashing combat, mixed with a few bits of platform-hopping that become needlessly frustrating thanks to Jack's dubiously programmed momentum – basically, he slides off the edges of platforms when he shouldn't.

There are special moves and upgrades to collect during the quest. Freeing prisoners earns new types of elemental swords, which you can toggle using the D-pad, and you can spend the tokens you've gathered on enhanced health, magic or sword speed.

We blew all ours on sword power, until we got bored of covering every inch of every level to collect them from their incoveniently located hiding places. With our superior slashing power, every enemy quickly succumbed with just a few seconds of random button-hammering.



JAILBREAK

Other than killing hundreds of robots, your main objective is to free the villagers held prisoner in cages dotted around every level. Rescuing them involves opening their cages and letting them run away, presumably to be minced by the whirring blades of all the robots you haven't yet killed.

DON'T KNOW JACK

Special combo moves are awarded to you at key moments, but none of them are very much use or, indeed, fun. Activate a combo and all you can do is sit back and watch while Jack goes through a preset animation sequence. If you were pointing him the wrong way when the combo started, Jack will just wind up hacking at thin air for a few seconds.

You also get a limited supply of arrows and shuriken, which behave in exactly the same way except the

SAMURAI JACK: THE SHADOW OF AKU

It's about a samurai and he's called Jack



△ Jack finds an enemy's weak spot, then goes looking for more robots to chop up.



△ Jack has his wicked way with a beetle, then looks for more robots to chop up.



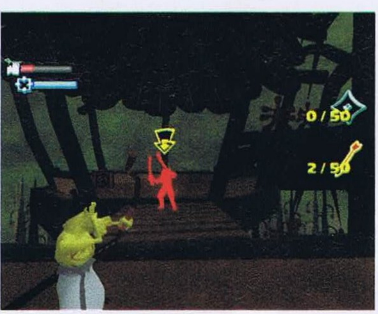
△ Jack fires a magic shuriken or two at a distant enemy and… you get the idea.



△ This is one of the more detailed areas, but there really isn't very much to do here. Hit the enemies above you using projectiles, then wander around the empty courtyard for a while.



△ Robots! What shall Jack do next?



△ A ninja, beaten using the homing arrows.

FOCUS, JACK

When the going gets tough, the tough use Sakai Focus – also known as Bullet Time, or plain old Slo-Mo-Shun. This means you can run around bigger enemies to strike directly at their weak spots. Brilliant!



arrows do a bit more damage. The targeting of enemies is completely automatic – you lock onto them as soon as you're in range, and you never miss.

The final over-simplified aspect of the fighting is the way you can block projectiles and send them flying right back to their source simply by holding down the left shoulder button. Once again, you never miss when you do this, although it's possible to introduce a tiny element of skill by manually swinging the sword.

GAME OVER

So the platform-hopping is imprecise and the combat unsatisfying. Sadly there's nothing else to the game, making *Samurai Jack* a predictable waste of what could have been a rather interesting license.

Even the semi-automatic camera is shoddy. Like any other 3D game you have to manipulate the camera for the best view – unfortunately it moves at a ridiculously slow pace, as if something were jammed in the C-stick, preventing it from moving more than halfway. Even at this glacial speed, there's slowdown when panning past fire effects or large areas with lots of enemies.

Hopefully somebody will have another crack at Jack in the future, and take inspiration from Capcom's spectacularly original yet strangely familiar *Viewtiful Joe*. If nothing else, the 2D look would be much better suited to the cartoon's style.

In the absence of a decent *Samurai Jack* game, you'd be better off tuning in to the reruns on the Cartoon Network or importing one of the compilation DVDs from the US. *Shadow of Aku* might be all right for a day's rental, but we reckon you're likely to get tired of it before you ever see the end.

MARTIN KITTS

> **"A PREDICTABLE WASTE OF WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN AN INTERESTING LICENSE"**

CHICKEN ABUSE

Hack away at the chickens that scamper around the village hub area and you might be in for a surprise. Well, since you're probably never going to buy this game, we'll tell you anyway – the chickens grow huge and peck Jack to death. You'll laugh until you stop laughing.



- Voices provided by the actors from the cartoon series.
- Shiny plastic disc.



- Very short.
- Very basic.
- Poor graphics.
- Sluggish camera.



Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
Konami
NGC/92 40%
Button-bashing combat without the exploration.



5 VISUALS

Low-detail characters that don't look much like the cartoon.



The voice acting is all right, and there's a fair bit of it too.

4 MASTERY

Takes you right back to the N64 era. But not in a good way.



Honestly, five hours from start to finish. Value for money?

VERDICT

Below-par platform adventure with severely limited fighting. Stick with the cartoon series for now.





GET OUTSIDE

Boktai's on-cart sun sensor is completely unique and adds a brilliant twist to the game – playing it in the sun really does help you defeat the vampires. And if you're still playing on an old-style GBA without built-in illumination, you'll probably be grateful for the extra light…



△ The dungeons in *Boktai*, which can be castles or all manner of places, are sprawling and full of places to explore. Naturally, heading outside allows you to charge your Gun De Sol – if the sun is shining. And you're outside. Obviously.



△ A locked chest and a big crate. Must be one of those confounded puzzle things, don't you think?



△ If you don't light lamps you'll have to fumble around in the dark, as you can see here.



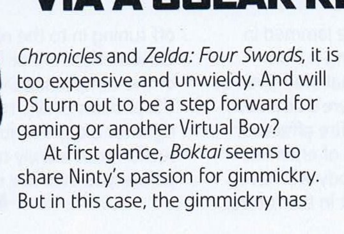
BOKTAI

Just in time for the summer sunshine, here's Konami's modest stab at moving the gaming goalposts.

It seems that over the last year or two, if you've been a Nintendo fan, you've had to put up with a lot of novelty. Although connectivity has reached magnificent heights with *Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles* and *Zelda: Four Swords*, it is too expensive and unwieldy. And will DS turn out to be a step forward for gaming or another Virtual Boy?

At first glance, *Boktai* seems to share Ninty's passion for gimmickry. But in this case, the gimmickry has been fashioned with gameplay in mind – and it *works*. Playing as vampire hunter Django, the idea is to use actual sunlight (any other light source won't work) to charge your vamp-dusting gun via a solar receptor on the cart itself. It's a brilliant conceit and it ties in beautifully with the undead theme.

> "USE SUNLIGHT TO CHARGE YOUR VAMP-DUSTING GUN VIA A SOLAR RECEPTOR"



Of course, it means you're going to *have* to go outside to charge the thing, although Konami have balanced this aspect of the game with certain restrictions. Solar storage systems negate the need – momentarily – for sunlight, and it's possible to overheat your gun, so you don't have to be outside 24/7 to play *Boktai*. The fact that the game keeps real time and moves into darkness when night falls in the real world also demands that you play cleverly when there's no daylight – and it's possible to use a wealth of stealth-tricks to get past the monsters in the game.

Ultimately, *Boktai* is clever and enormously enjoyable. And who can begrudge a game that forces you to get outside on a sunny day, anyway?

JES BICKHAM

INFO BURST

FROM	KONAMI
PLAYERS	1-2
SINGLE CART LINK	NO
SAVE	ON CART
OUT	NOW
COST	£30



DID YOU KNOW? *Boktai* was the personal project of Hideo Kojima, the mastermind behind *Metal Gear Solid*. Kojima regards Shigsy as his 'master' when it comes to games. Nice, eh?

VAN HELSING

Man in hat hunts down vampires. Now *that's* high concept…


△ The first boss-type character you'll encounter is Mr Hyde, who curiously is hanging around in Notre Dame. Wonder what the hunchback thinks of that?


△ Running around a castle laboratory. Just like real-life vampire slaying, see?



△ You get treated to digitised renditions of the film's main stars.


Another day, another movie tie-in. Be still, our giddy hearts! Cynicism aside, *Van Helsing* is several cuts above some of the other dross we've been privy to this issue (mentioning no speech-impaired canines who happen to be friends with hippies and solve mysteries from a dayglo VW camper).

Based on the film reinvention of Bram Stoker's elderly hero, *Van Helsing* is a straightforward action piece with enough details to hold your interest for a short while. Following the plot of the film closely – you get to fight Mr Hyde in the first five minutes, for instance – the game mostly requires you to slay hordes of the undead, something made essential by the cheap design tactic of forcing you to clear an area of enemies in order to progress. This constant combat is enlivened by Van Helsing's steampunk accessories: spinning Toho blades, pistols, crossbows and a *Zelda*-style grappling hook with which to grab enemies or reach unreachable areas. You'll get more weapons as you progress, and there are copious items to collect.

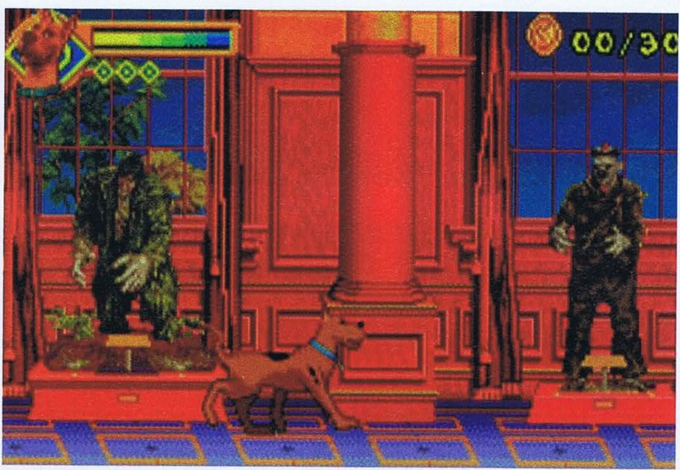
It's initially entertaining, capturing the gothic pulp feel of the film, but in the long run it's *Castlevania*-light, with none of the magic, literally or metaphorically, of Konami's game. Mildly diverting, but nothing more.

JES BICKHAM



INFO BURST	
FROM	VIVENDI
PLAYERS	1
SINGLE CARD LINK	NO
SAVE	PASSWORD
OUT	NOW
COST	£30

NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING **61**


△ Gasp – as you guide Scooby Doo from left to right! Raise an eyebrow – at the insultingly simple gameplay! Gnash your teeth – at the lack of a battery save!

SCOOBY DOO 2 MONSTERS UNLEASHED

Stop holding your breath – it's here! What? You couldn't care less?


It is eminently possible that no-one in the *entire world* particularly wants to play *Scooby Doo 2: Monsters Unleashed*, even despite the welcome virtual presence of Sarah Michelle Gellar and the comely bookish lass who plays Velma. It's an entirely typical movie licensed cash-in and, while being a halfway competent game by virtue of actually *working*, has inspired abject apathy in the entire **NGC** team. It's only because it's so underwhelmingly ordinary that we're unable to find the energy to treat it as hideously contemptible and thoroughly hateful.

So, as expected, you get to play as Scooby and the gang, side-scrolling and leaping, and occasionally trying out a daringly diverse new type of gameplay, such as driving the Mystery Machine from a top-down view. It is surprise-less. It does everything you expect it to – averagely. The one ace it has up its sleeve (a code for the game revealed during the end credits of the movie) is thoroughly wasted by virtue of being irredeemably rubbish. You get an alternative ending. Hoo-frickin'-ra and whoop-de-chuffing-doo.

To add insult to injury, the game uses a password save system (cheers). But, to grasp at the tiniest of straws, this isn't terrible. Just boring and tedious and entirely expected. You'll have more fun throwing your £30 at a group of tramps and watching the ensuing bumfight. And that'd be a silly thing to do.

JES BICKHAM


△ This is pretty indicative of the general level of fun in the game.

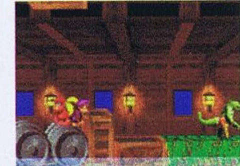
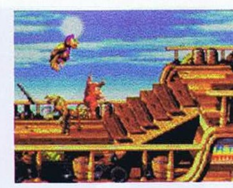


INFO BURST	
FROM	THQ
PLAYERS	1
SINGLE CART LINK	NO
SAVE	PASSWORD
OUT	NOW
COST	£30

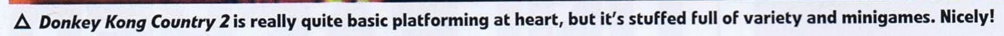
NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING **33**

"Hideously boggle-eyed twee freaks"

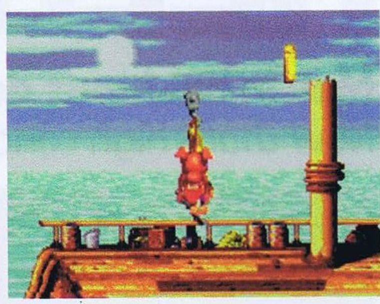
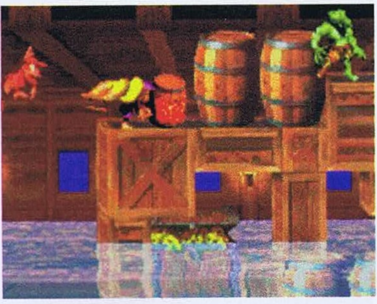
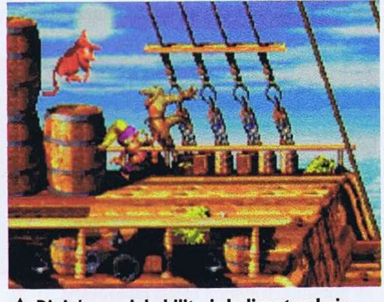



Δ Yes, the springy snake-thing is tops. Tops, we tells ya! And so is the ostrich. Brilliant.

Δ *Donkey Kong Country 2* is really quite basic platforming at heart, but it's stuffed full of variety and minigames. Nicely!

Δ Dixie's special ability is helicopter-hair.

DONKEY KONG COUNTRY 2

It's like 1995 again, but now we've got better consoles.



And so Nintendo's strip-mining of their venerable past continues. On the one hand, we're extraordinarily glad that they're taking pains to keep their past glories alive and kicking by reproducing their golden oldies for GBA (a moot point if you own the originals, we suppose, but there you go), but on the other we really wish they'd knuckle down and get some *new* games out. Ah well, perhaps we'll see all the exciting stuff on DS…

A RARE TREAT

Donkey Kong Country 2 was Rare's second game starring one of Nintendo's big mascots, and, as at least half of the **NGC** office will tell you, it was remarkably impressive for its day. (Not that we're old, you understand, but videogame years seem a bit like dog years, when compared to actual *human* years).

Time has been remarkably kind to it, even if distance and experience show it to be rather more routine and by-the-numbers than we remembered. As a 2D platformer, it's fast paced and packed with detail – indeed, the visuals, once so astonishing on the creaky old SNES, are still capable of raising an eyebrow – and throws much more into the mix than its entertaining forebear.

"THIS GBA PORT ALSO STUFFS IN A WELCOME CO-OP MODE AND A NUMBER OF MINIGAMES"

So you've got a wealth of secrets and all those animals to ride (now including an ostrich and a snake as well as a rhino and a swordfish). It set the pattern for many of Rare's future games in requiring you to collect multiple items simultaneously. Sadly, *DKC2* is where Rare's penchant for creating hideously boggle-eyed, twee freaks took root, too; new chimp Dixie Kong was the first in a long line of Dr. Moreau-style monsters to star in Rare games, followed by the likes of *Diddy Kong Racing's* frankly terrifying Timber The Tiger. It all reached a terrible low point in (shudder) *Donkey Kong 64's* Lanky Kong. Eurgh.

DKC2, though, is big and fun, if punishingly difficult at times. It's never as imaginative, considered and play-all-day fun as the equivalent Mario games, but it's none the worse for that. As well as faithfully recreating the 40-odd levels of the original game, this GBA port also stuffs in new features, such as a welcome co-operative mode and a number of minigames that cater for the lone player and his mates. They're not a bad bunch, Funky's Flying being the best of them (reminding us ever-so-slightly of *Pilotwings*), and all in all, *DKC2* remains the best sort of monkey business.

JES BICKHAM



INFO BURST

FROM	NINTENDO
PLAYERS	1-4
SINGLE CART LINK	NO
SAVE	ON CART
OUT	25TH JUNE
COST	£30

NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING

81


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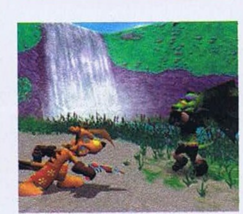
Over the next few pages, you'll see a selection of Top Fives – games hand-picked by us which we recommend anyone new to Nintendo Gamecube gets involved with. Now we want yours. They can be any regular category of game, or something a little different (your five favourite multiplayer games, five games with brilliant endings etc). Send us your Top Five list and earn yourself a priceless (or, more likely, worthless) prize!

NGC ESSENTIAL

THE BEST 'CUBE GAMES MONEY CAN BUY...

TOP FIVE ANTIPODEAN GAME CRITTERS

Tie me kangaroo down! It's the only one not yet in a GC game.



TY THE TASMANIAN TIGER
Stripy XXXXer



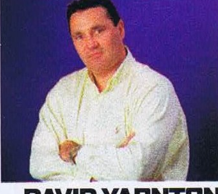
KNUCKLES
An echidna. A *red* echidna



CRASH BANDICOOT
Gobby ginger 'supial.



TAZ
Obviously.



DAVID YARNTON
Big Oz Cheese of Ninty UK.







1 THE LEGEND OF ZELDA THE WIND WAKER — 97

NINTENDO • NGC/79

The babbling of the internet whingers faded to a stunned silence when this hit the shelves. It's as exquisitely fashioned as a Disney feature film, and doesn't lose any of the gameplay for it. Some sailing sections spoil it a bit, and it's pretty short, but this is as close to 'art' as 'games' have been yet.

NGC STAR GAME



2 METROID PRIME — 97



NINTENDO NGC/79

A polished, addictive adventure-cum-shooter-cum-platformer that pushes the envelope in every field.



3 SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE — 96

NINTENDO NGC/73

Mazza's cleaning up a tropical island. With the polished visuals and sense of fun of *Mario 64*, this pushes the right buttons.

4 MARIO KART DOUBLE DASH!! — 93



NINTENDO NGC/88

The best *Mario Kart* ever – and the best multiplayer title on GC. More characters, special weapons and crazy tracks.

5 F-ZERO GX — 93



NINTENDO NGC/85

Speed, challenge and stunningly designed tracks blended to form the finest of arcade racing experiences. It really is fast.



6 SOUL CALIBUR 2 — 92

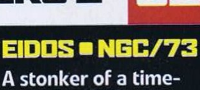


NAMCO NGC/85

The best fighting game on *any* system, offering rich depths to those who go looking. And you can go nuts with Link.



7 TIMESPLITTERS 2 — 92



EIDOS • NGC/73



A stonker of a time-travelling FPS, *Timesplitters 2* crept out of nowhere to become GC's finest example of the genre. Wick!

8 SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE — 91





NINTENDO NGC/68

An eye-singeing multiplayer and cameos from just about every Ninty character make this basher special.

9 HARVEST MOON A WONDERFUL LIFE

91



UBI SOFT NGC/91

Utterly charming farm sim. Sounds unremarkable, but it'll have you addicted in no time. Wonderful indeed.

10 HITMAN 2 SILENT ASSASSIN

91



EIDOS ■ NGC/82

Tighten the fibre-wire and leave your morals at the door as Mr 47 brings his elimination simulation to the 'Cube. This is stealthy, free-form gaming at its finest.

11 WAVE RACE BLUE STORM


91



NINTENDO NGC/67

Slight frame-rate problems in PAL, but *Blue Storm* is still a fabulous racer with *the* most incredible water effects.

12 VIEWTIFUL JOE


90

CAPCOM NGC/80

Distinctive-looking side-scrolling 2D beat-'em-up in which you feel you're editing a movie while you're playing a game.

13 WORMS 3D


90



SEGA ■ NGC/87

Turn-based strategy, but loopier than a tin of spaghetti hoops. The annelids enter 3D – all you need for stupid fun is three homicidal pals.

14 BURNOUT 2



90



ACCLAIM NGC/80

B2 takes the best bits of the first game – speed and collisions – and welds them onto more modes than you can eat.



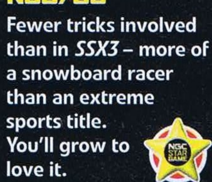
15 PHANTASY STAR ONLINE

90

ATARI ■ NGC/78

Essentially *Gauntlet* with lots of numbers and menu screens, online *PSO* becomes an epic tale of crate-smashing and item collection.

16 1080° AVALANCHE
90



NINTENDO NGC/89

Fewer tricks involved than in *SSX3* – more of a snowboard racer than an extreme sports title. You'll grow to love it.

17 METAL GEAR SOLID THE TWIN SNAKES


90



KONAMI ■ NGC/91

This story of taking on terrorists is an old one, but the updated graphics and gameplay make this Snaky snuff-fest a Gamecube essential.

18 SKIES OF ARCADIA LEGENDS


90

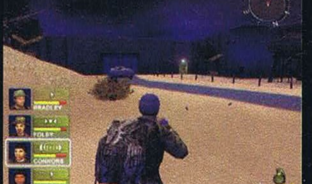


ATARI ■ NGC/81

Vast RPG ported from the Dreamcast. "It'll take away a chunk of your life and you won't want it back", says a man versed in such things.

19 CONFLICT DESERT STORM 2

90



SCI ■ NGC/86

Sandy warmongering. You're not allowed to let any of your men die in this sequel, which leads to all sorts of life-saving heroic gameplay.

20 SSX 3
89



EA ■ NGC/87

Improves over its excellent predecessor in every area. A range of modes, ludicrous tricks and the mountain to end all videogame mountains will keep you busy.

TOP TEN GBA GAMES



1 ADVANCE WARS 1 & 2
Cute-looking turn-based strategy, with a frighteningly addictive, super-challenging core. Honestly, it's better than it sounds. *AW2* is essentially *Advance Wars 1.5*, but it's tweaked to perfection.

2 WARIO WARE
Imagine the simple graphics and gameplay of Game & Watch fired at you in five-second bursts. Loopy fun that you'll keep returning to.



3 MARIO & LUIGI SUPERSTAR SAGA
An RPG with puzzle and platform elements starring our two top plumbers.



4 THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST
One of the most memorable outings for Link (alongside *Ocarina of Time*). Comes with bonus *Four Swords* multiplayer adventure.



5 SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 2
This tweaked version of the SNES classic boasts a massive game world and some of the tightest level designs ever.



6 POKÉMON RUBY & SAPPHIRE
The same structure as before – catch 'em all, send 'em into battle – but still the most entertaining RPG out there…



7 MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT
Nicks the best bits from the SNES and N64 versions, and if you've got four friends, GBAs and cables, they can play too.

8 METROID FUSION/ ZERO MISSION
Everything that has ever made *Metroid* great can be found in these two games. A sprawling environment littered with enemies and an imposing difficulty level.



9 HARVEST MOON
A slow burner, *HM: Friends of Mineral Town* is a farming/charming sim to die for. It'll last you months.



10 STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3
An incredible conversion of one of the best fighters ever. Massive single-player and a brilliant two-player.

NGC DIRECTORY

Your at-a-glance guide to every other PAL title on Gamecube.

HOW IT ALL WORKS

Title, score, publisher and where to find the review.

A brief outline of what to expect and whether you should consider it...

CHAR SIU, PIKACHU! — 95

BBQSOFT ■ NGC/11

Covered in delicious Chinese marinade and roasted, this is Pika's finest moment. Requires rice for optimum fun.



18 WHEELER PRO AMERICAN TRUCKER — 48
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/68

Drive your truck and avoid 'smokey'. The arcade version with the sit-in cabinet was better.

2002 FIFA WORLD CUP — 30
EA ■ NGC/69

As much fun as being told your parents have been killed in a car crash and then contracting Weil's Disease.

ACE GOLF — 74
EIDOS ■ NGC/74

A highly enjoyable, relaxing sticksie-ball game that treads the middle-ground between fun and serious.

AGGRESSIVE INLINE — 81
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/72

Hawk's alterno-clone – you skate around massive arenas, 'busting' tricks on a pair of 'roller-boots'.

ATV QUAD POWER RACING 2 — 70
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/77

Wave Race on land with farming utility vehicles. Competent, but there's superior racing fare out there.

BALDUR'S GATE DARK ALLIANCE — 80
VIVENDI ■ NGC/81

Dungeon-slashing adventurising with fewer numbers and a special two-player flavour. Actually quite good.

BARBARIAN — 70
VIRGIN ■ NGC/72

A button-mashing fantasy battler complete with fully-smashable arenas. Fun, but not as good as *Smash Bros.*

BATMAN: DARK TOMORROW — 15
KEMCO ■ NGC/81

For ages, Gamecube's most arse-clenchingly bad title. Clunky, dull, gameplay-free superheroics.

BATMAN: RISE OF SIN TZU — 45
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/88

Repeated bashing that would've been great 15 years ago. It's okay, but only just. Batman deserves better.

BATMAN VENGEANCE — 70
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/67

Cel-shaded platforming cartoon bat-action. One of the first Cube games – it's looking pretty ropy already.

BEACH SPIKERS — 79
ATARI ■ NGC/72

Volleyball on sand. Addictive with four players, but the single-player's longevity lets the side down.

BEYBLADE: SUPER TOURNAMENT BATTLE — 10
ATARI ■ NGC/88

For £40, we'll come and cheesegrater your eyes. It's more fun and lasts longer than this spinning top sim.

BIG AIR FREESTYLE — 28
ATARI ■ NGC/75

Another awful off-road bike title, the kind that makes you want to cry the second you've started playing.

BIG MUTHA TRUCKERS — 71
EMPIRE ■ NGC/83

A cross between *Elite* and Smokey and The Bandit, but with The Reynolds replaced by wall-eyed hillbillies.

BILLY HATCHER & THE GIANT EGG — 86
SEGA ■ NGC/87

Rescue the Chicken Elders by rolling an egg around and smacking bad guys with it. Hatch it while you can!

BIONICLE — 29
EA ■ NGC/87

Diabionicle, more like. Tedious and fiddly with a duff camera and no incentive to keep playing.

TOP FIVE PLATFORM GAMES

SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE
A tour-de-force of everything good gaming should be.

LUIGI'S MANSION
Yes, it's a little easy to polish off, but you'll enjoy every second.

RAYMAN 3 HOODLUM HAVOC
Can't touch *Sunshine*, but it's entertaining and looks 'the bomb'.

WARIO WORLD
Not that tough to beat, admittedly, but still bags of fun.

SONIC MEGA COLLECTION
The best hedgehog games in existence on one tiny disc.

TOP FIVE RACING GAMES

MARIO KART: DOUBLE DASH!!
Single-player mode looks as cute as ever, but is rock hard.

F-ZERO GX
Expertly crafted arcade fun. Really rockets along.

WAVE RACE BLUE STORM
Classic Nintendo action with dazzling water effects.

BURNOUT 2
Fast car racing combined with steel-crunching crashes.

EXTREME G 3
The weapons are what make this future racer shine.

BLOOD OMEN 2 LEGACY OF KAIN — 72
EIDOS ■ NGC/77

Gamecube's other undead hack-fest. After 1,000 years of slumber, evil vampire Kain is awake and hungry.

BLOOD RAYNE — 65
VIVENDI ■ NGC/79

Vampire fun. Dismember Nazis, fire period weaponry, and battle an *evil priest* driving an *armoured pulpit*.

BLOODY ROAR: PRIMAL FURY — 74
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/68

Competent morphing-into-animals fighting antics, but *Capcom vs SNK* and *Mortal Kombat* have surpassed it.

BMX XXX — 48
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/76

Childish, boring BMX game featuring strippers showing you their nipples. Get a girlfriend instead.

BOMBERMAN GENERATIONS — 70
VIVENDI ■ NGC/76

Yet another update of the arson franchise. Single-player is tedious; four-player is addictive as ever.

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER CHAOS BLEEDS — 70
VIVENDI ■ NGC/86

Lacking in essential Buffiness, and not just because the Gellar girl didn't voice it. Good, but not great.

BURNOUT — 86
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67

With spectacular crashes and perfect handling, *Burnout* is a dream of a game, even if it's over a bit quickly.

CAPCOM VS SNK 2 EO — 79
CAPCOM ■ NGC/72

A great game, but purist retro freaks will want to fork out for a clunky arcade stick to get the most from it...

CARMEN SANDIEGO: SECRET OF THE STOLEN DRUMS — 70
BAM! ■ NGC/92

Reasonable edutainment title, which sees junior gamers globetrotting after an art thief.

CASTLEWEEN — 16
WANADOO ■ NGC/81

Unfairly difficult dismal platforming tedium with some kind of cartoony black magic schtick going on.

CEL DAMAGE — 60
EA ■ NGC/66

Cel-shaded car-combat game in the vein of violent cartoons. Too manic and confusing for its own good.

CONFLICT DESERT STORM — 89
SCI ■ NGC/80

Tense and teeth-gritting, with a great co-op mode. Brain-based fun for those nuclear winter evenings.

CRASH BANDICOOT THE WRATH OF CORTEX — 40
VIVENDI ■ NGC/75

One of the worst ports we've seen – of a game that was a load of crap to begin with! Avoid like death.

CRASH NITRO KART — 53
VIVENDI ■ NGC/89

The basic graphics and cheaty CPU karters are bad, but the loading times are ridiculous. Buy *Mario Kart*.

CRAZY TAXI — 70
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67

A title that's so old, it's been included as a minigame in *GTAIII*. Creaky graphics, but still good fun.

DAKAR 2 — 79
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/80
Driving around in a vast expanse of dirt for days on end? *Dakar 2* manages to make this pretty good fun.

DARK SUMMIT — 51
THQ ■ NGC/69
SSX Tricky with all the speed, style and entertainment removed with near-surgical precision. A waste of time.

DAVE MIRRA 2 FREESTYLE BMX — 75
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67
Pornography-free, good, moto-cross game. Slick, with big arenas – but will only appeal to the BMX hardcore.

DIE HARD VENDETTA — 80
VIVENDI ■ NGC/74
Shoot holes in people who look like terrorists, so the US can enjoy one more night of guiltless slumber.

DEAD TO RIGHTS — 60
EA ■ NGC/83
Mindless ultraviolence. JACK SLATE is PISSED OFF and wants to HURT SOMEONE!

DEFENDER — 50
MIDWAY ■ NGC/79
Pointless 3D update that makes one of the hardest-core arcade classics easy and, by extension, depressingly dull.

DEF JAM VENDETTA — 87
MAJESCO ■ NGC/82
Wrestling thumpfest featuring all your favourite hip-hop artistes. Bone-crunching moves and 'sick' beats.

DISNEY'S EXTREME SKATE ADVENTURE — 74
DISNEY ■ NGC/85
Neither extreme nor adventurous, but fine for people not up to *Tony Hawk's*, like your little brother or nan.

DISNEY'S HIDE & SNEAK — 25
CAPCOM ■ NGC/92
Mickey hides in things and sneaks past enemies. Stealth-action without any action. Tedious. Terrible.

DISNEY'S MAGICAL MIRROR — 26
DISNEY ■ NGC/73
The Mouse patronises his way through this hideous 'adventure'. Almost Beckettian in its non-eventfulness.

DISNEY SPORTS BASKETBALL — 55
KONAMI ■ NGC/82
Strip away the franchise and it's another simple Sports title. Soon to follow: *Disney Sports Russian Roulette*.

DISNEY SPORTS FOOTBALL — 69
KONAMI ■ NGC/76
This isn't anywhere near as bad as you may think. It's an amusing, simple footie game for younger gamers.

DISNEY'S PARTY — 56
EA ■ NGC/86
Mickey and chums in a mildly entertaining party game – but would you pay £30 to be mildly entertained?

DISNEY SPORTS SKATEBOARDING — 64
KONAMI ■ NGC/80
The Mouse and his irritating friends try 'busting tricks'. Walt must be spinning in his cryogenic pod.

DONALD DUCK GOIN' QUACKERS — 32
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/68
Like *Crash Bandicoot*, but with The Duck in charge, going bthackakackth. Also total rubbish.

TOP FIVE FIGHTING GAMES

SOUL CALIBUR 2
Gorgeous Link-fuelled beat-'em-up from fight kings Namco.

SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE
All your favourite Ninty types pounding each other's faces in.

VIEWTIFUL JOE
The only one-player beat-'em-up in our top five. Stunning.

DEF JAM VENDETTA
The wrestling game that appeals to non-grapple fans as well.

MK DEADLY ALLIANCE
"Mind if I remove your spleen?" "Ooh, go on – finish me."

TOP FIVE SHOOTING GAMES

METROID PRIME
Tough as nails shooting-heavy sci-fi adventure.

TIME-SPLITTERS 2
Class first-person shooting from the *GoldenEye* boys.

STAR WARS ROGUE LEADER
Looks great and lacks the ropy on-foot sections of the sequel.

XIII
Euro-shooter with comic-book looks and very serious violence.

IKARUGA
A pure arcade shooter that's tougher than most.

DOSHIN THE GIANT — 62
NINTENDO ■ NGC/74
Quirky title that puts you in charge of a giant man who must help/hinder islanders. A little short-lived.

DRAGON BALL Z: BUDOKAI — 43
ATARI ■ NGC/87
Dated fighter where the characters move as though their feet are lead-plated. Avoid even if you're a DBZ fan.

DRAGON'S LAIR 3D — 48
THQ ■ NGC/91
As fiendishly unforgiving as the original, but no fun at all. For nostalgia freaks only.

DRIVEN — 60
BAM ■ NGC/68
Very basic, short game of the bad film about driving fast in a circle. Filling up bargain bins as we speak.

DR MUTO — 70
MIDWAY ■ NGC/79
Amusing mad-doctor platforming game where you have to mutate into different animals to solve puzzles.

DROME RACERS — 46
EA ■ NGC/85
Brings absolutely nothing new to racing, and doesn't manage to do the old stuff with any flair either.

EGGO MANIA — 49
KEMCO ■ NGC/72
Rubbish take on *Tetris* that, mystifyingly, involves ovulations. Wouldn't look out of place on an Amiga.

ENTER THE MATRIX — 73
ATARI ■ NGC/81
Take the red pill and find out how disappointing this movie tie-in is. We were expecting something special.

ESPN INTERNATIONAL WINTER SPORTS 2002 — 37
KONAMI ■ NGC/67
Combines tiresome button-mashing with equally dull timing and precision exercises. Dull.

ETERNAL DARKNESS — 89
EA ■ NGC/74
A Lovecraftian yarn of ancient evils told through 12 playable characters and an innovative magic system.

EVOLUTION SKATEBOARDING — 78
KONAMI ■ NGC/79
Snazzy-looking *Hawk's* clone, but then, who wants an Elvis impersonator if the King's in town?

EVOLUTION SNOWBOARDING — 23
KONAMI ■ NGC/79
Fight bad guys while sliding down a hill. Worse than *Dark Summit*. Games like this should be made illegal.

EXTREME G3 — 85
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67
An underrated gem, offering speed, huge tracks, ingenious weaponry and eye-sparkling visuals.

F1 2002 — 67
EA ■ NGC/71
Rock-hard racing your dad will enjoy. Also features humourless Hun driving robot Schumacher version 1.0.

F1 CAREER CHALLENGE — 81
EA ■ NGC/83
Packed representation of the glamorous world of F1 team management. You can take the cars for a spin too.

FIFA FOOTBALL 2003 — 83
EA ■ NGC/75
EA finally remember how good football games are made. Actually better than *ISS 2*. A vast improvement.

FIFA FOOTBALL 2004 — 85
EA ■ NGC/87
It wasn't broken, but EA fixed it anyway, slinging in more stats, new animations and a great Career mode.

FINAL FANTASY CRYSTAL CHRONICLES — 86
NINTENDO ■ NGC/91
Beautiful looking, but with expensive hardware needs. An ambitious multiplayer RPG that mostly works.

FINDING NEMO — 65
THQ ■ NGC/86
Horrible loading times and stuttering graphics spoil what could have been enjoyable for rugrat gamers.

FIREBLADE — 59
MIDWAY ■ NGC/77
Brain-free 'copter game that'll appeal to military-obsessed psychos and fans of 80s Vietnam war films.

FREEDOM FIGHTERS — 83
IO ■ NGC/86
Blast invading Russian commies intent on taking over the US. Realistic? Not on your nelski. Fun? Oh da.

FROGGER BEYOND — 59
KONAMI ■ NGC/80
The trend for 'improving' ancient games by making them 3D taken to its most extreme conclusion.

GAUNTLET: DARK LEGACY — 25
MIDWAY ■ NGC/68
We'd be far more comfortable with this if we'd had it inserted rectally. An insult to the memory of a classic.

GLADIUS — 70
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/88
Persevere with the tutorials and odd glitches – there's a rewarding strategy title buried under the graphics.

GOBLIN COMMANDER UNLEASH THE HORDE — 72
JALECO ■ NGC/92
Lead your rather small army of grunts to victory in this entertaining (if slightly simple) RTS.

GODZILLA: DESTROY ALL MONSTERS MELEE — 68
ATARI ■ NGC/74
Stompy monster fun in multiplayer mode, but otherwise a little weak. Get *Smash Bros* instead.

GOTCHA FORCE — 69
CAPCOM ■ NGC/90
Repetitive robot collect-'em-up battler which is actually pretty good fun, if a tad simple and repetitive.

HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS — 78
EA ■ NGC/75
Attractive and competent adaptation of Potter's film – but rather easy. Only die-hard wizard fans need apply.

HARRY POTTER AND THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE — 70
EA ■ NGC/89
Out on PS2 before *CoS*, now out on Cube with graphics nabbed from *CoS*. At least the game's simple...

HARRY POTTER QUIDDITCH WORLD CUP — 62
EA ■ NGC/88
Potter fans will love the details, but as a sports game, this broom-based title is one to sweep under the rug...

DIRECTORY

Every Gamecube game ever… rated!



THE HOBBIT 58
VIVENDI ■ NGC/88
Competent enough cutesy adventure but somehow not interesting, despite elves and dragons and dwarves.

HOT WHEELS HIGHWAY 35 WORLD RACE 33
THQ ■ NGC/90
Ugly, gaudy and slow racer. Oh, and the handling's rubbish. Too boring to have a place on your Cube.

HOT WHEELS VELOCITY X 45
THQ ■ NGC/75
Basic racing/car-combat game based on plastic toys. Strictly for the very, very young. Or very stupid.

HULK 65
VIVENDI ■ NGC/82
Get angry, turn green, and SMASH your way through puny soldiers. Also stealth sections with Bruce Banner.

IKARUGA 85
ATARI ■ NGC/80
Old-style shooter – originally designed for robots, now available for human consumption. Very, *very* hard.

ISS 2 83
KONAMI ■ NGC/68
A winning formula tarnished with unnecessary 'improvements'. Good – but also a step backwards.

ISS 3 78
KONAMI ■ NGC/82
The once-invincible football series sinks ever lower with a misguided new 'close-up' mode.

THE ITALIAN JOB: LA HEIST 54
EIDOS ■ NGC/85
So short, even games goobers can finish it. The lack of variety doesn't help. A mini game in every respect.

JAMES BOND 007 AGENT UNDER FIRE 70
EA ■ NGC/70
Workaday gameplay dressed up in off-the-peg shooter upholstery, shooting baddies with ping-pong balls.

JAMES BOND 007 EVERYTHING OR NOTHING 68
EA ■ NGC/91
Barely above average, this not-based-on-a-film film tie-in is only redeemed by 007's winning personality.

JAMES BOND 007: NIGHTFIRE 72
EA ■ NGC/75
The best Bond game on Gamecube so far, but the visuals can't hide an FPS that's lacking overall.

JEDI KNIGHT II 67
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
A seriously disappointing PC conversion of an overrated shooter. Huge game, but quite tedious.

JEREMY MCGRATH SUPERCROSS WORLD 20
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/69
Like a nightmare about doing cross-country wearing steel-wool pants and barbed wire flip-flops.

JIMMY NEUTRON BOY GENIUS 18
THQ ■ NGC/78
Tedious, sorry, devoid-of-inspiration 'puzzle' game that actually manages to out-borify *Universal Studios*.

JIMMY NEUTRON JET FUSION 71
THQ ■ NGC/89
Jimmy's second game is a big improvement. A simple platformer good for younger gamers.

JUDGE DREDD DREDD VS DEATH 84
VIVENDI ■ NGC/89
An atmospheric, exciting shooter made better by the presence of the Big Chin himself, Judge Dredd. Drokk!

KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER 75
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/73
Same old trick-based extreme-sports, but this time in tubes made of water. Quite good fun, for a while.

KNOCKOUT KINGS 2003 79
EA ■ NGC/75
If the arcadey nature of *Rocky* doesn't sit that well with you, give this face-smashing simulator a go instead.

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING 47
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/69
Bringing back old-skool 'rasslers' isn't enough to make this any good. A shambolic licensing cash-cow.

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING II 50
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/76
Yet another travesty of a wrestling game, but made marginally better by the addition of Big Daddy.

LOONEY TUNES BACK IN ACTION 56
EA ■ NGC/90
Irritating monkey-collecting platformer. You'll find yourself wearing a tinfoil hat to stop all the voices.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS THE RETURN OF THE KING 86
EA ■ NGC/87
More playable characters, including Gandalf, and less button-mashing make an epic, very enjoyable sequel.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS THE TWO TOWERS 68
EA ■ NGC/78
Repetitive hacking game with RPG overtones. Guide your man through levels making goblin prosciutto.

TOP FIVE ADVENTURE/ RPGS



ZELDA: THE WIND WAKER
Phenomenal. A reason to own Gamecube itself.

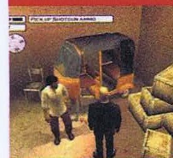
METROID PRIME
Tough as nails shooting-heavy sci-fi adventure. Again.

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE
A number-cruncher that turns epic with a bit of t'internet.

SKIES OF ARCADIA LEGENDS
If 'classic' RPGs are your bag, this boy'll be a sackful of joy.

LOST KINGDOMS II
Polished RPG with card collecting elements. Neat.

TOP FIVE ACTION ADVENTURE



HITMAN 2
Compelling assassin sim that kills the competition dead.

MGS: THE TWIN SNAKES
Beautifully updated version of Solid Snake's first outing.

RESIDENT EVIL
A superior zombie-cruncher with slightly niggly controls.

ETERNAL DARKNESS
Another Nintendo exclusive that never fails to entertain.

SPLINTER CELL
Captivating stealth-laced adventure from the hand of Tom Clancy.

LOST KINGDOMS 86
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/70
Collect, er, cards, and battle monsters with them in fantasy landscapes. The sequel does it better, though.

LOST KINGDOMS 2 87
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/81
Set 200 years after the events of the first game. It's more satisfying, but it's still on the frothy side.

LUIGI'S MANSION 88
NINTENDO ■ NGC/67
Luigi stars in this short, but ace, fantastically playable combination of *Super Mario World* and *Ghostbusters*.

MADDEN NFL 2004 87
EA ■ NGC/85
Great stuff – a satisfying and accessible version of the sport for new *and* experienced Yankee Egg Chasers.

MARIO PARTY 4 68
NINTENDO ■ NGC/75
Disappointing. Not bad if you're in the mood for party fun, but it's done little to improve on the originals.

MARIO PARTY 5 80
NINTENDO ■ NGC/89
A much better boardgame from Mazza, although the new Capsule system can slow things down a lot.

MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX 2 70
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
A decent extreme sports sim. A bit slicker than *Dave Mirra*, but with smaller, tighter arenas. Does the job.

MEDAL OF HONOR FRONTLINE 74
EA ■ NGC/75
FPS set during World War II. Looks ropy in places, but it's atmospheric and highly enjoyable.

MEDAL OF HONOR RISING SUN 67
EA ■ NGC/88
Looks so old, it should come with Werthers Originals, and both allies and enemies are a bit thick. Disappointing.

MEGA MAN NETWORK TRANSMISSION 59
CAPCOM ■ NGC/84
Here's an idea: take a great GBA game, strip the good bits out and put the resulting platformer on GC.

MEN IN BLACK II ALIEN ESCAPE 45
ATARI ■ NGC/78
Rubbish off-the-peg third-person shooting game of the rubbish off-the-peg movie. Did we mention it's rubbish?

METAL ARMS GLITCH IN THE SYSTEM 82
VIVENDI ■ NGC/88
Well-designed bottylicious shooter. It's big and it's extremely tough. And we all love robots with guns, eh?

MICRO MACHINES 57
ATARI ■ NGC/78
Like the recipe for bread or wine gums, *Micro Machines* doesn't change much, and this iteration is no exception.

MINORITY REPORT 39
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/77
Astonishingly brutal third-rate ass-whupping game that takes place on the sets of a Spielberg movie.

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE OPERATION SURMA 69
ATARI ■ NGC/93
More accomplished than the terrible first *M:I* title, but lacking in flexibility and freedom somewhat.

MORTAL KOMBAT DEADLY ALLIANCE 80
MIDWAY ■ NGC/77
The best *Kombat* yet! The blood-soaked spine-ripping yarn finally gets the update it deserves on Gamecube.

MX SUPERFLY 63
THQ ■ NGC/73
Handles like you're driving space bikes on the surface of the moon. The best of a very bad bunch, though.

MYSTIC HEROES 71
THQ ■ NGC/75
Simplistic 3D *Gauntlet*-style slasher that's somehow entertaining and charming. Well, Geraint thinks so.

NBA 2K3 85
ATARI ■ NGC/79
Puts all other basketball games to shame. Great gameplay complements an engrossing Career mode.

NBA COURTSIDE 2002 79
NINTENDO ■ NGC/68
The second-best basketball sim available, but it's still lacking. Strictly for hardcore fans of the Ball of B.

NBA LIVE 2003 70
EA ■ NGC/75
The yearly EA update. Solid gameplay; lots of lovely numbers; otherwise not much different from last year.

NBA LIVE 2004 86
EA ■ NGC/88
This year's *NBA Live* has tighter controls and a vastly improved Dynasty mode. A tad soulless, mind.

NBA STREET VOL 2 88
EA ■ NGC/85
Almost negates the need for realistic sports sims – and all for half the price of real basketball trainers.

NEED FOR SPEED 2 HOT PURSUIT 69
EA ■ NGC/74
Ironically slow racer. A lazy port has ruined what was originally a pretty entertaining franchise.

NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 77
EA ■ NGC/88
Aargh! I can't see… oh, that's the graphics. This street racer needs a bit more attention to detail, we feel.

NFL 2K3 86
ATARI ■ NGC/79
A meaty gridiron sim that could even threaten *Madden*. Management bits don't detract from the gameplay.

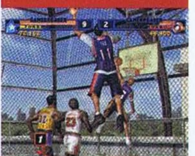
NFL STREET 79
EA ■ NGC/90
American footie hits the streets. The Challenge mode and four-player are great. It'll take ages if you're duff.

NHL 2003 64
EA ■ NGC/75
A realistic approach to ice hockey which isn't particularly fast or – more importantly – fun.

NHL 2004 57
EA ■ NGC/85
Behind-the-scenes additions don't compensate for the terrible frame rate on the ice. Play it at your peril.

NHL 2K3 72
ATARI ■ NGC/80
Complicated ice hockey title with stodgy gameplay. Similar to *NFL 2K3*, but doesn't quite pull it off.

TOP FIVE SPORTS SIMS



NBA STREET VOL 2
An off-the-wall b-ball title which puts more serious games to shame.

MADDEN NFL 2004
Forget soccer, Madden's still delivering the best pitch-based entertainment on the Gamecube.

NBA LIVE 2004
EA's superb 'serious' basketball title.

FIFA 2004
The best *FIFA* yet.

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2004
The final entry in our sports game listing is both a) another EA game and b) a golf game. It's ace.

TOP FIVE EXTREME SPORTS GAMES



1080° AVALANCHE
More refined and robust than *SSX*.

SSX3
Fantastic sequel with plenty of challenge. More stunts than *1080°* – but not *quite* as polished a racer.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3
Absorbing wheel-'em-up. *Tony Hawk's 4*'s worth a look too.

AGGRESSIVE INLINE
Roller boot-based *Hawk's* style action.

EVOLUTION SKATEBOARDING
Another *Hawk's* clone that'solidly put together.

NHL HITZ 20-02 79
MIDWAY ■ NGC/67
Exaggerated ice hockey title in a similar vein to *Red Card*, where the sticks aren't just for hitting the puck.

NHL HITZ 20-03 65
MIDWAY ■ NGC/74
Another year, another dose of frantic ice action. Not much cop on the original, mind.

PAC MAN WORLD 2 70
EA ■ NGC/78
The Pac is back for hilarious retro-themed platforming fun. Shamelessly pilfers everything from *Mario 64*.

PIKMIN 86
NINTENDO ■ NGC/80
Created using textures from Shigsy's own garden. A wonderful RTS with multicoloured vegetable men.

PITFALL THE LOST EXPEDITION 48
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/92
Colourful but short and shoddily-put-together platformer starring a hero from days of yore.

P.N.03 77
CAPCOM ■ NGC/84
This super-stylish shooter with its dancing heroine is only marred by dull bosses and design.

POKÉMON CHANNEL 24
NINTENDO ■ NGC/92
Watch really rubbish telly with Pika. Because that's what having a good time is all about…

POKÉMON COLOSSEUM 84
NINTENDO ■ NGC/93
Not the epic RPG we expected, but it's fun enough and Colosseum mode will last you forever.

POOL PARADISE 80
IGNITION ■ NGC/92
Actually quite good tropical-themed pool sim – and you get to play more than boring old nine-ball.

PRO RALLY 2002 58
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/74
An okay game completely and ruthlessly dragged down by its thoroughly awful, frustrating handling.

PRO TENNIS WTA TOUR 48
KONAMI ■ NGC/74
The only tennis game on 'Cube so far, but with rubbish non-analogue controls and distinctly whiffy visuals.

PUYO POP FEVER 80
SEGA ■ NGC/91
Blob-bursting puzzle fun. It's nothing very new, but still a great puzzle title. The sort of thing girls love.

RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP 74
SCI ■ NGC/78
Solid, does all the things a rallying game should. Should do the job until *McCrae* sees the light of day.

RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC 84
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/78
The limbless French Freak™ has the last laugh with a game that, insists our correspondent, is actually good.

RED CARD 20-03 78
MIDWAY ■ NGC/71
Violent football game where you mince opponents with stud and fist until the meat shows.

RED FACTION 66
THQ ■ NGC/82
Shoot capitalist scum in the face and blow some holes in walls in this distinctly average brown fighting game.

REIGN OF FIRE 59
BAM ■ NGC/76
A poor game of a poor film, even if you do get to burn stuff. Nice ideas ruined by dodgy physics and controls.

RESIDENT EVIL ZERO 85
CAPCOM ■ NGC/78
Ditches the solo formula for a two-character system. Great set-pieces, looks lovely… more *Resi*, basically.

RESIDENT EVIL 89
CAPCOM ■ NGC/72
The classic zombie horror-fest, with stunning visuals and a brilliant storyline. Controls are still crap, though.







Every Gamecube game ever… rated!

RESIDENT EVIL 2 — 62
CAPCOM ■ NGC/81
Experience the shambling, undead terror of original PSone graphics! Revisit Leon and Claire for just… £30!

RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X — 70
CAPCOM ■ NGC/91
A very late post of this two-character game. Solid *Resi* gameplay and a great plot are the big draws.

RESIDENT EVIL: NEMESIS — 65
CAPCOM ■ NGC/81
Braaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiinnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnsssssssssssssssssssssss! Etcetera.

ROBOTECH BATTLECRY — 77
TDK ■ NGC/77
Stompy robots go to war in the game of the Japanese cartoon. Not bad, as far as stompy robot games go.

ROCKY — 78
RAGE ■ NGC/74
A solid fighter where you guide Rockies one to five to greatness. Top two-player, loads of unlockable extras.

ROGUE OPS — 62
KEMCO ■ NGC/90
The spirit of Joanna Dark lives on – but only just – in the form of Nikki Connors. Nowehere near as good, mind.

SCOOBY DOO MYSTERY MAYHEM — 31
THQ ■ NGC/93
Feeble puzzles and a terrible plot mean Scoob continues his run of appaling software mistakes. Rooby Ron't!

SCOOBY DOO NIGHT OF 100 FRIGHTS! — 36
THQ ■ NGC/74
Platforming non-action that'll interest you for half an hour or until you need the loo; whichever comes first.

THE SCORPION KING — 30
VIVENDI ■ NGC/75
Bad. Very bad. Guide a poor approximation of The Rock and hit bad guys until they bleed from the eyeholes.

SEGA SOCCER SLAM — 67
ATARI ■ NGC/74
A cartoonish footie game with an interest in violence. Cracking in multiplayer – poor on your own.

THE SIMPSONS: HIT & RUN — 80
VIVENDI ■ NGC/87
The Simpsons go all *GTA* and start driving recklessly and doling out the violence. And what's more, it works!

THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE — 52
EA ■ NGC/68
A bad *Crazy Taxi* rip-off, with Simpsons characters bolted on, spewing repetitive 'funny' one-liners.

THE SIMS — 81
EA ■ NGC/79
Addictive people simulating comes to the Cube. A great sense of humour and lots of potential for mischief.

THE SIMS BUSTIN' OUT — 72
EA ■ NGC/89
What's outside the house? Hmm? No longer is your sim confined to his own four walls. Agoraphobics beware.

SMUGGLER'S RUN WARZONES — 78
ROCKSTAR ■ NGC/73
Huge landscapes and fast-paced 'racing' in buggies is let down by repetitive gameplay and awful music.

SONIC ADVENTURE 2 BATTLE — 70
ATARI ■ NGC/67
Sega's annoying mascot on Gamecube, now with an extra dimension added. Does anyone care any more?

SONIC ADVENTURE DX DIRECTOR'S CUT — 38
ATARI ■ NGC/83
A GBA link-up feature for GC, but otherwise a straight port of a game that was rubbish to begin with.

SONIC HEROES — 52
SEGA ■ NGC/91
We *don't* hate Sonic, but if he keeps dishing out these woefully inadequate platformers we might start to.

SONIC MEGA COLLECTION — 70
ATARI ■ NGC/79
If you have a retro craving, you could do worse: seven games on one disc, accurate down to the loading times!

SPEED KINGS — 57
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/83
Wannabe *Burnout* with, strangely, lots of sliding under lorries involved. Otherwise bland and unnecessary.

SPIDER-MAN THE MOVIE — 72
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/69
Dodgy control and camera are the only problems with this platform adventure. Voiced by the original cast.

SPY HUNTER — 55
MIDWAY ■ NGC/68
Appaling frame-rate, nasty course design and linear racing make this one to avoid. A pointless remake.

SPYRO: ENTER THE DRAGONFLY — 40
VIVENDI ■ NGC/75
Much like *Crash Bandicoot*, this is another shoddy port of a game that was never much fun in the first place.

TOP FIVE MULTI-PLAYER GAMES



MARIO KART DOUBLE DASH!!
The Best Multiplayer Game Ever. We still haven't stopped playing it.

WORMS 3D
Ace fun with ludicrous weapons and a rising tide.

FINAL FANTASY CRYSTAL CHRONICLES
An innovative approach to multiplayer adventuring.

ATSUMARE MADE IN WARIO
Wario Ware made big and multiplayer for the Gamecube. Only available on import, but worth it.

SUPER MONKEY BALL
The second one's slightly better, but they're both really good monkey-rolling fun.

SSX TRICKY — 87
EA ■ NGC/69
Has PS2 written all over it, but excellent. Fast courses, shortcuts and mid-piste scrappage equal FUN.

STAR WARS BOUNTY HUNTER — 68
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/77
The panting, pot-bellied, rubbish space-assassin gets the *Tomb Raider* treatment in this average game.

STAR WARS THE CLONE WARS — 71
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
Battlezone-style tank blaster set around Episode II – not as good as *Rogue Leader*, but fun all the same.

STAR WARS ROGUE LEADER — 87
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/68
The most memorable – and the best-looking – Star Wars game yet. The Battle of Hoth will melt your eyes.

STAR WARS: ROGUE SQUADRON 3: REBEL STRIKE — 83
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/88
On-foot bits? Star Wars is about whizzing around in spaceships, not saving some bint with padded ears.

STARFOX ADVENTURES — 72
NINTENDO ■ NGC/74
Adventure that's way too easy and linear. Should have been far better. Hardly a fitting send-off for Rare.

SPAWN ARMAGEDDON — 52
NAMCO ■ NGC/91
Plays like *Devil May Cry*, but nowhere near as good. Lock on, jump, fight, win, look for next fight…

SPHINX AND THE CURSED MUMMY — 69
EUROCOM ■ NGC/91
Some seemingly careless flaws ruin an otherwise fun game – and you're going to love that Mummy!

SPLINTER CELL — 89
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/81
Stealth-fest with a gritty feel and the opportunity to operate various Clancy-approved hi-tech gizmos.

SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS BATTLE FOR BIKINI BOTTOM — 32
THQ ■ NGC/89
The plot's weak and the levels are badly designed – and Spongebob himself is nauseating.

THE SUM OF ALL FEARS — 25
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/76
One of the most inept games we've played. Clancy says bury the copies in the desert before anyone notices.

SUMMONER A GODDESS REBORN — 68
THQ ■ NGC/79
Much levelling-up and numbers floating from people's heads. Crappy visuals, but an engrossing adventure.

SUPER BUBBLE POP — 65
JALECO ■ NGC/78
Tetris-y flavoured *Bust-a-Move* for the Sunny Delight generation, with chemically-induced visuals and music.

SUPER BUST-A-MOVE ALL STARS — 70
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/89
Bust-A-Move! On your Gamecube! Puzzle fans rejoice – but only buy it if you haven't got a version already.

SUPERMAN: SHADOW OF APOKOLIPS — 60
ATARI ■ NGC/81
Supes redeems himself somewhat with this stylised and maze-free effort based on the animated cartoons.

SUPER MONKEY BALL — 88
ATARI ■ NGC/67
Simian-flavoured update of *Marble Madness*. One of the weirdest, most wonderful Gamecube games around.

SUPER MONKEY BALL 2 — 82
ATARI ■ NGC/78
The apes are back with levels harder of core, and a new story mode involving love, betrayal and banana-theft.

SX SUPERSTAR — 71
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/83
Motocross scrambling, enhanced with a *Def Jam*-style Career mode that involves girlfriend upgrades.

TAK & THE POWER OF JUJU — 69
THQ ■ NGC/92
Ticks all the right platforming boxes and is pleasant enough. But exciting? Not remotely.

TARZAN FREERIDE — 59
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/67
Disney. Platformer. Need we say any more? Jungle-based gameplay with the Seventh Earl of Greystoke.

TAZ WANTED — 52
ATARI ■ NGC/72
Some of the worst level design we've ever seen in this frustrating cel-shaded *Mario*-wannabe platformer.

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES — 40
KONAMI ■ NGC/92
Pick a turtle. Any turtle. They're all the same. A shallow button-basher that should've stayed in the sewer.

TETRIS WORLDS — 38
THQ ■ NGC/73
THQ ruin one of the Best Games Ever by trying to make it 'better'. Will anyone stop these people?

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2003 — 82
EA ■ NGC/75
The world most efficient golf robot gets his own game. Actually really good, in a surprisingly arcadey way.

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2004 — 84
EA ■ NGC/86
Apart from the ginormous size and a few tweaks for stattoes, it's the same as the last one.

TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON — 66
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/79
Clancy has another go at squad-based tactical ops, and this time things run more smoothly. Entertaining stuff.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3 — 87
ACTIVISION NGC/67
Mental grinds and stunts backed up by a mountain of extras – if you haven't tried *Hawk's*, do it now.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4 — 85
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
No time limits and great RPG elements complement the larger areas in *TH4* – a well-tweaked fourquel.

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND — 79
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/88
The latest Hawk's lacks visual polish but the Story mode's been massively improved.

TOP ANGLER — 35
XICAT ■ NGC/81
Generic fishing game involving bass, that doesn't even get the basics of its limited genre right. Tiresome.

PAUL'S SENSE TALK

TECHNOLOGY
Everyone knows that electronic equipment runs on smoke – if you let the smoke out, it dies. Geraint's Dreamcast did that.

S'NO JOKE
Posting snow to people doesn't work, it melts and they just don't get your drift.

ANATOMY
Where the hell does your lap go when you stand up?

MIRRORS
Why isn't your image upside down when you look in a mirror? I mean, it's back to front, so why stop there?

WIND
The reason it's so windy down here is cos of those bloody wind farms all over Cornwall and Devon. Waste of electricity if you ask me...

Do you have more 'sense' than our Sense Master Paul Edwards? You probably do! He wants your Sense Talks, mate!

Send them to him at paul.edwards@futurenet.co.uk or to Sense Talk at the usual address.

TOP GUN: COMBAT ZONES — 71
VIRGIN ■ NGC/72
Movie-based flyboy antics. GC's only flight 'sim' – pretty challenging, but we recommend you try it first.

TY THE TASMANIAN TIGER — 60
EA ■ NGC/76
An average platformer with an Antipodean twist. It's a solid example of the genre but nothing more or less.

TUROK EVOLUTION — 71
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/73
Disappointing dino-hunting FPS sequel. Not as bad as *Turok 3* on N64, but serious niggles let the series down.

TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA — 75
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/88
Looks great, but can be fiddlier than a violinists' convention. As close as you'll get to *GTA* on 'Cube.

UFC THROWDOWN — 51
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/73
Freestyle thump-fest, where you lead your oily man to victory in some Greek-style athletic contest.

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS — 24
KEMCO ■ NGC/67
Anyone who makes a game involving picking up litter should be stuffed into a suitcase and hurled into the sea.

URBAN FREESTYLE SOCCER — 17
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/91
The characters are loathsome and the animation's terrible. A new low for Gamecube sports games.

V-RALLY 3 — 68
ATARI ■ NGC/82
Speedy rallying game that wouldn't be so bad if they'd concentrated on the basics first. Like, er, the steering.

VIRTUA STRIKER 3 V2002 — 55
ATARI ■ NGC/69
Nice to look at, horrible to play. Rubbish AI and unwieldy controls make for a bobbins game of footie.

WALLACE & GROMIT IN PROJECT ZOO — 70
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/87
Recreates the plasticene duo's world brilliantly. Only a few fiddly bits let this youngsters' platformer down.

WARIO WORLD — 86
NINTENDO ■ NGC/83
The anti-Mario gets his own game. A surreal frenzy of lowbrow humour and monster-hitting. Waah!

WORMS BLAST — 63
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/74
Kinda like *Bust-a-Move* in a puzzly-action kind of way, except this isn't anywhere near as good.

WRECKLESS THE YAKUZA MISSIONS — 51
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
Drive like a loon and smash up cars and anything else that gets in your way. Sub-*Burnout* nonsense.

WWE CRUSH HOUR — 43
THQ ■ NGC/83
Those magnificent greasy men drive greasy fighting machines for some unlikely *Vigilante 8*-style 'thrills'.

WWE WRESTLEMANIA X8 — 70
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/72
Okay, but with nothing particularly new and a familiar engine. But if you insist on buying these things...

WWE WRESTLEMANIA XIX — 68
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/85
Clumsy interface, limited CAW parts and irritating Story mode. Still, it'll sell loads, no matter what its flaws are.

XGRA — 71
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/89
Okay future racer, hampered by the fact that it's come out at nearly the same time as the superior *F-Zero GX*.

XIII — 86
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/88
A flawed gem of a shooter. Rock-hard in places, with wonderful set pieces and comic-book-style graphics.

X-MEN: NEXT DIMENSION — 55
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
Duller than dishwater. Fighting-by-numbers stuff that offers little of interest. Waste of a pretty cool licence.

X-MEN 2 WOLVERINE'S REVENGE — 64
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/82
Is he a man? Is he a wolf? Is he a genetically engineered super-soldier? Fighting with the clawed X-Man.

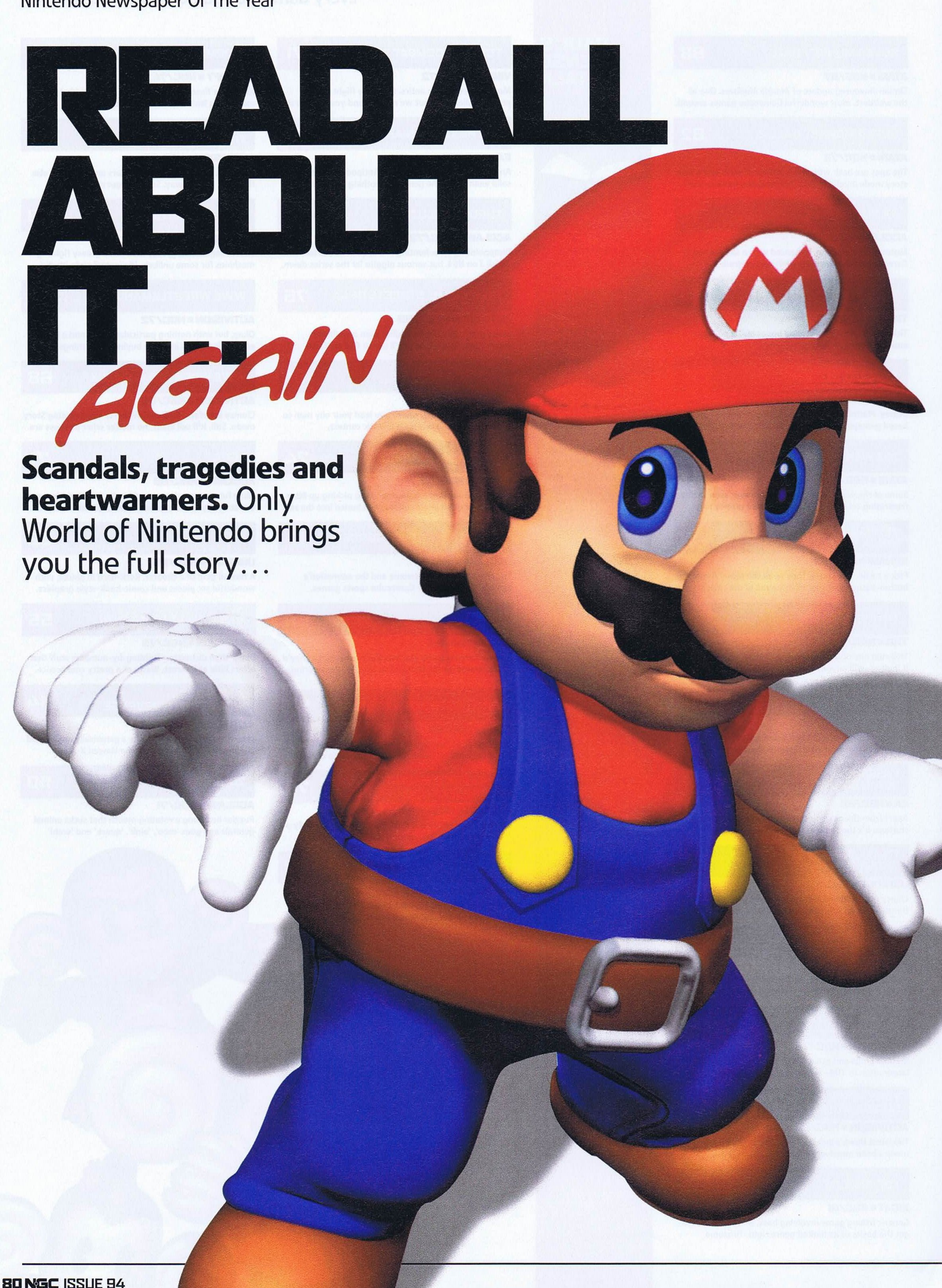
ZOOCUBE — 50
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/71
Puzzler involving a rotating mouth that sucks animal genitals and goes 'moo', 'oink', 'quack' and 'wah!'





READ ALL ABOUT IT... AGAIN

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BEHEADED! UNDEAD FURY AT WANTON KILLING
"Blatant alivism," says spokeszombie
page 5

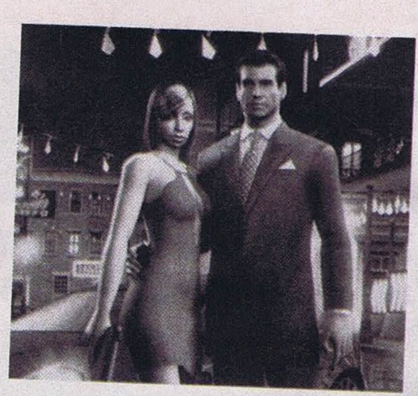
WORLD OF NINTENDO

Nintendo Newspaper Of The Year

April 23rd 2004
Published in London, Washington and Kyoto

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LICENCE REVOKED



A farce too far for Britain's favourite spy

LEGENDARY SECRET agent James Bond has finally decided to call it a day following the embarrassing comedy of errors which allowed evil genius Nikolai Diavolo to achieve world domination.

Assigned to thwart Diavolo's diabolical plans, the 77-year-old veteran (pictured, right, with a fan) became an object of ridicule among the mad dictator's followers when his attempt to capture Diavolo ended in unmitigated disaster.

"How was I supposed to know the train tracks would just stop like that?" asked the geriatric gigolo. "I was all set to ride my motorcycle underneath Nik's train when the track ended without warning and I plunged into a canyon. They ought to put up signposts, you know."

Bond's misfortune continued when he tried to pursue Diavolo in a high-powered sports car, but was unable to unlock the door before the time limit expired.

"It was humiliating," admitted the superannuated superspy. "I thought I was close enough to open the blasted thing but I couldn't find the button on my key fob. Then I got my trouser leg caught on the bumper, and by the time I managed to free myself it was game over."

The incident that prompted Bond's retirement came during a daring raid on Diavolo's missile base.

"I had a terrible crick in my neck that restricted my movement throughout the mission, and it really flared up while I was looking for a few of Nik's henchmen to shoot.

"One second I was staring directly at a chap in front of me, the next my head sort of snapped 90 degrees clockwise and I was locked onto a ledge that I had abseiled down a minute earlier. Nik's boys just fell about laughing. I could barely move, despite an overwhelming desire to curl up in a foetal position and sob into my childhood comfort blanket. I knew my time was up."

Former colleagues paid tribute to the long-serving lothario. Gadget guru Q said: "He's a smashing fellow. Lately he hasn't been able to figure out how to work most of my inventions without me yelling glaringly obvious instructions in his ear, but then I'm not the man I used to be either."

LOST AT SEA



THE SEARCH for a young boy missing since February was called off yesterday, amid fears that the tragic child has fallen prey to cuddly, incompetent pirates.

Link, 12, was last spotted shooting arrows at fish in rough water several miles off the south coast. The boy was previously reported to have purchased a variety of lethal weaponry, allegedly including crude explosive devices, before setting sail in a leaky homemade boat which he claimed spoke to him in the voice of a lion.

A police spokesman said: "If anyone finds his body, please leave whatever's left of it by the nearest postbox for collection."

Link leaves a sister, grandmother, and a long trail of broken pottery.

IS MARIO KART FIXED?

Fans demand answers as scandal deepens



FURIOUS PUNTERS called for a steward's inquiry after the 16th and final race in this season's All-Cups Tour ended with exactly the same result as the previous 15.

Grand prix organiser Toad S Worth refuted allegations of race-fixing, despite statistical evidence that suggests the finishing order is actually determined in advance, possibly as early as the first race in the tour. "Balderdash!" exclaimed Toad. "Stuff and nonsense!"

"There's clearly something dodgy going on," complained one annoyed kart fan. "I'd heard the rumours but I refused to believe it until I saw Mario and Luigi zoom through the field to win on the line, despite having spent the entire race right at the back of the pack. I might have considered it a miraculous piece of skill if it had happened once or twice this season, but 16 times in a row? Somebody's having a laugh."

This season, despite starting from the front of the grid in every race, Team Yoshi has finished consistently last, with Team Mario powering from the back of the grid to a victory which has become routine.

The predictable results have seen television audiences fall by 50%, with viewers claiming the sport has become boring. Kart chiefs promise a shake-up next season, with new rules and only one driver per vehicle, although they cannot guarantee that the finishing positions in the first round of the tour will not be replicated in every subsequent race.

No kart drivers were available for comment, although our reporter spotted Peach and several others walking out of a betting shop, sharing large bundles of bank notes among themselves. When approached, the drivers hid their faces and ran away.

Also today:
Professor Oak arrested in animal fight raid – p7
Worldy Bloke: Why I'm reduced to dancing for pennies – p24
Boy genius spontaneously combusts – photo pull-out

VEGETABLE INVASION FROM OUTER SPACE!
"Take me to your Titchmarsh" demands leader page 20

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WORLD OF NINTENDO

Nintendo Newspaper Of The Year
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KIRBY: IN DEEP PUPUPU

King Dedede washes hands as fallen star loses paddle



RESCUE WORKERS in Pupupu Land have admitted defeat in their month-long battle to stop Kirby from automatically accelerating.

The effort to save the stricken hero was called off on the orders of King Dedede's finance department, effectively condemning Kirby to an eternity spent speeding around a bland, circular track.

"He's just going round and round," said rescue co-ordinator Waddle Dee. "It's kind of sad. He's sitting on his star, watching the world go by. For the first few days he was in good spirits, waving and pulling faces every time he flew past. He really appreciated it when we'd hold up messages of support from his fans, but most of those gave up interest in Kirby a couple of weeks back."

Kirby's arch rival, Meta Knight, revealed how deeply he was affected by the tragedy. "When I first heard the news I actually wet myself laughing. Several times, in fact. Then I went down to the track to see for myself, and it was quite horrible. I was so upset, I couldn't even bring myself to throw all the stones I took with me."

Meta Knight choked back the tears as he continued: "Poor Kirby has given up hope. They tell me he stopped steering in an effort to crash into the wall, but it made no difference. Now the only people at the site are gangs of drunken youths who visit at night and commit lewd acts on the track as Kirby passes overhead. It's all he has left to live for."

King Dedede is currently reviewing Waddle Dee's proposal to have Kirby destroyed using a controlled explosion.

BOARDER BLAMED IN SNOW TRAGEDY



SNOWBOARDER RICKY Winterborn has been arrested on suspicion of deliberately causing the avalanche that entombed the mountain resort of Outway Knoll last week.

Currently released on police bail, Winterborn categorically denies all charges. Reading from a prepared statement, his solicitor said: "Ricky is, like, totally innocent, of all charges, dude."

Off-piste skiers have been blamed for causing previous avalanches, but this is the first time that the picturesque Outway Knoll (population 1,500) has been completely buried. Speaking via radio waves from beneath a gigantic snowdrift, Mayor Frosty Winterball revealed: "They wait for heavy snowfall, then start avalanches simply for kicks. To them it's just a game, trying to outrun the deluge, but it's a nightmare for us in the town."

The avalanches often peter out before they hit populated areas, generally stopping once they engulf the fleeing thrill-seekers. But occasionally a skier manages to escape the crushing river of snow, and it ploughs unchecked into whatever lies at the bottom of the slopes. Unfortunately for Mayor Winterball, this time the victim of the avalanche was Outway Knoll.

"When I get my hands on the idiot responsible for this, I'll wax up his snowboard and shove it where the sun don't shine," moaned the mayor. "Sideways."

Monkey carnage continues

"Leave monkeys alone," say hippies
"No way," say fun-lovers

ANIMAL RIGHTS campaigners from as far afield as Green Hill joined the vigil outside the Monkey Ball centre yesterday, swelling the ranks of protesters to almost 20.

The furious tree-huggers demanded an immediate halt to the simian-based activities taking place within the centre, but last night groups of happy, smiling families arrived as usual, to enjoy a relaxing evening throwing monkeys down a ski ramp.

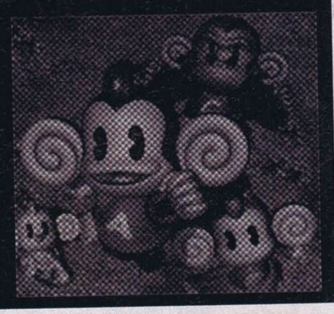
"It's disgusting," blasted one hippy.

"No it isn't," retorted a five-year-old child.

The debate continues. Meanwhile inside the centre, monkeys were being thrown down the ramp at a rate of three per minute. "It isn't cruel," said a spokesman. "While it's true that after we chuck them down the ramp we never see the monkeys again, that's no proof that anything untoward has happened. For all we know they're perfectly happy down there, swimming around like little sea monkeys." Despite this, staff continue to refuse all requests to settle the matter by dredging the monkey pond.

Scientists at the centre insist that toy monkeys could not be used in place of real ones. "It's just not the same," lamented a boffin.

Monkey fans can get half-price admission by collecting the vouchers inside WoN every day this week! See page 30 for details.



Also today:

- Farmer marries barmaid: Bride wore scarlet – p3
- Sonic in doping scandal: "I was framed," claims bushpig – p9
- "Go back to Endor, stupid wookiee!" – p17

Dead bodies arranged into rude word - but is it art? page 3

WORLD OF NINTENDO

November 22nd 2004
Published in London, Washington and Kyoto

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DROP DEAD!



Hero tells Dinosaur Planet to shove it

LONE ADVENTURER Fox McCloud has launched an unprecedented attack on the citizens of Dinosaur Planet, branding them "Stupid, ungrateful reptiles with really annoying voices."

Speaking from his office on board the Great Fox, the Starfox star also claimed that he "Wished he hadn't bothered saving the useless sh*ts," and that the galaxy "Would be a far better place if they were extinct."

McCloud's tirade came after he single-handedly saved Dinosaur Planet from the disembodied head and hands of Andross, only for Queen Earthwalker to present him with a bill for damage caused during the battle.

"I suppose I shouldn't have expected anything less," said McCloud. "God alone knows why I thought I'd get any thanks from a bunch of cold-blooded, pea-brained, inbred lizards."

The space ace claims that citizens hampered his quest from the beginning. "It was like I was babysitting those cretins," he raged. "I was trying to save their poxy little rock from certain oblivion, yet nobody would lift a finger to help unless I brought them some ridiculous gifts, usually from the other side of the planet. And the only transport they let me use was a senile mammoth which could barely walk."

McCloud ranted: "I wish I had eaten that little crapwart Prince Tricky as soon as he became irritating, which was about five minutes after the dozy lump of lard they call Queen lumbered me with the brat. If she doesn't tear up her bill within the next 24 hours I'm going to pay her a visit, and I promise you, what happens will not be pretty. Funny, but not pretty."

Dinosaur Planet residents were shocked by the intensity of McCloud's outburst. "You pay this much," whined a local shopkeeper.

Codec is not 'cruel and unusual'



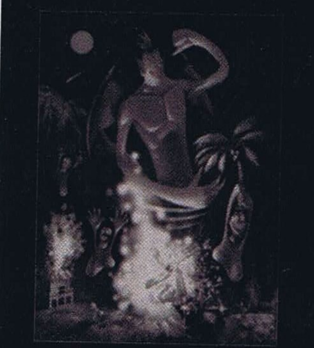
THE CASE of Solid Snake vs Foxhound Inc collapsed dramatically yesterday, following testimony from communications expert Mei Ling.

Mrs Ling asserted that it was entirely necessary within the context of Foxhound's operations to subject Snake to countless hours of confusing and tedious codec conversations. "Without them the entire mission would have lasted less than 90 minutes," she said, "And there's no way we could have justified Foxhound's huge budget based on such a brief amount of action."

Snake, who had sought compensation for repetitive strain injury caused by pressing the A-button to skip through thousands of pages of codec transcripts, spent the rest of the day sitting motionless, listening to the voices in his head.

LOVE GIANT GOES BAD

Islands destroyed by yellow flasher



CONCERN WAS growing last night for the safety of the 800 inhabitants of the remote Barudo archipelago, after all communication with the islanders was lost.

The paradise islands first hit the news with reports of a miraculous "Love Giant" known in the local dialect as Doshin. A group of missionaries who sailed out to the archipelago six weeks ago sent back messages confirming the existence of a "Huge yellow man" with a "Suspicious belly button" who possessed the power to reshape rocks and earth. Worshipped by the islanders, Doshin apparently provided them with protection and shelter.

But last weekend Doshin's mood inexplicably changed for the worse, and the final reports from the island told of a terrifying spree of rampant chaos and human sacrifice. Doshin's orgy of destruction began when a cow got stuck up a tree. Instead of rescuing the beast, as was customary, Doshin picked it up and hurled it into the sea.

The crazed giant then turned on his terrified followers, smashing the temples built in his honour and crushing fragile humans beneath his stomping feet. Shortly before the beast sank the archipelago beneath the ocean, islanders managed to release one last message stating that Doshin had "Sprouted wings" and was "Heading your way."

A spokesman yesterday dismissed the warning as a "Cheap publicity stunt" before being picked up and hurled over the horizon by a colossal red demon.

Also today:

Farmer cheats on barmaid after tomato disaster – p2



Turok: My cheapo sequel shame – p15



"Wookiees don't live on Endor!" – p8



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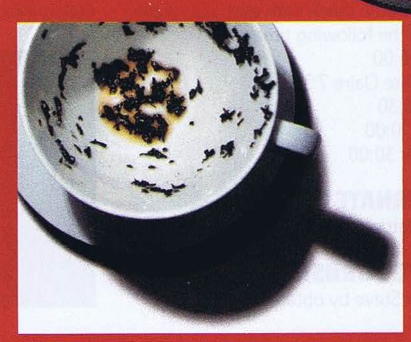


We get a load of Germans to draw Nintendo characters. Recognise 'em? P102

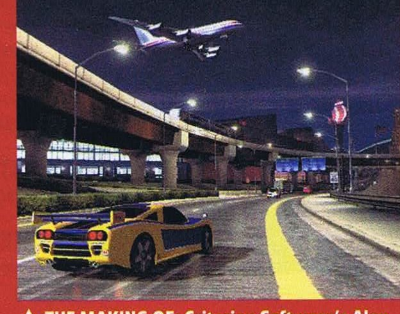
CONTENTS

A concise guide to the informative guts within...

CHECK IT!...



△ TEA LEAF: **NGC**'s own mystic munter is seeing portents in her teacup this time...



△ THE MAKING OF: Criterion Software's Alex Ward shows us how *Burnout 2* was created.

NGC GUARANTEE
TIPS, CHEATS
PROBLEMS SOLVED
EVERYTHING
YOU NEED!

THE TIPS YOU NEED FOR THE GAMES YOU'RE PLAYING...

TIPS EXTRA



SPAWN ARMAGEDDON

CHEAT CODES
To enter these codes, pause the game while playing, enter the button codes and then unpause.

LEVEL SELECT
Up, Down, Left, Right, Left, Left, Right, Right.

ALL WEAPONS
Up, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, Left, Left.

EVERYTHING EXCEPT ALL GUNS AND INFINITE AMMO
Up, Left, Down, Right, Right, Down, Left, Right.

UNLIMITED AMMO
Up, Down, Left, Right, Up, Left, Down, Right.

INFINITE NECROPLASM
Up, Down, Left, Right, Down, Left, Up, Right.

REMOVE BLOOD
Up, Down, Left, Right, Up, Up, Up, Up.



UNLOCK ENCYCLOPAEDIA
Up, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, Up, Down.

UNLOCK ALL COMICS
Up, Down, Left, Right, Right, Left, Left.

RESIDENT EVIL: CODE VERONICA X



BATTLE MODE
Beat the game.

LINEAR LAUNCHER
Finish Battle mode with each character under the following times:
Claire 6:00
Alternate Claire 7:30
Chris 6:30
Steve 10:00
Wesker 30:00

ALTERNATE CLAIRE
Beat Battle mode as Claire Redfield.

STEVE BURNSIDE
Unlock Steve by obtaining the Gold Luger Replica as Chris.





NGC READER KNOWLEDGE!

In Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles, it's worth using a second character for the Rabena Te Ra. The grey switch and block puzzle here is virtually impossible if you try it on your own.
Kelly Watts, Shropshire

WESKER
Beat Battle mode as Chris.

ROCKET LAUNCHER & INFINITE AMMO
Finish game with an A Rank.

STOP THE GAME'S CLOCK
Open the lid on your Gamecube and the game clock will stop – handy when you want to finish with a high rank.

METAL ARMS: GLITCH IN THE SYSTEM

OPEN THE ORIGINAL CAMPAIGN MODE
Finish the Campaign mode.

PLAY AS GENERAL CORROSIVE
Collect every secret chip in the game (including the speed chips) and you'll be able to play as General Corrosive in the multiplayer mode.



SECRET LEVELS
Beat the final mission to unlock the MI6 Combat Simulator and the MI6 Survival Test.

ENTER THE MATRIX

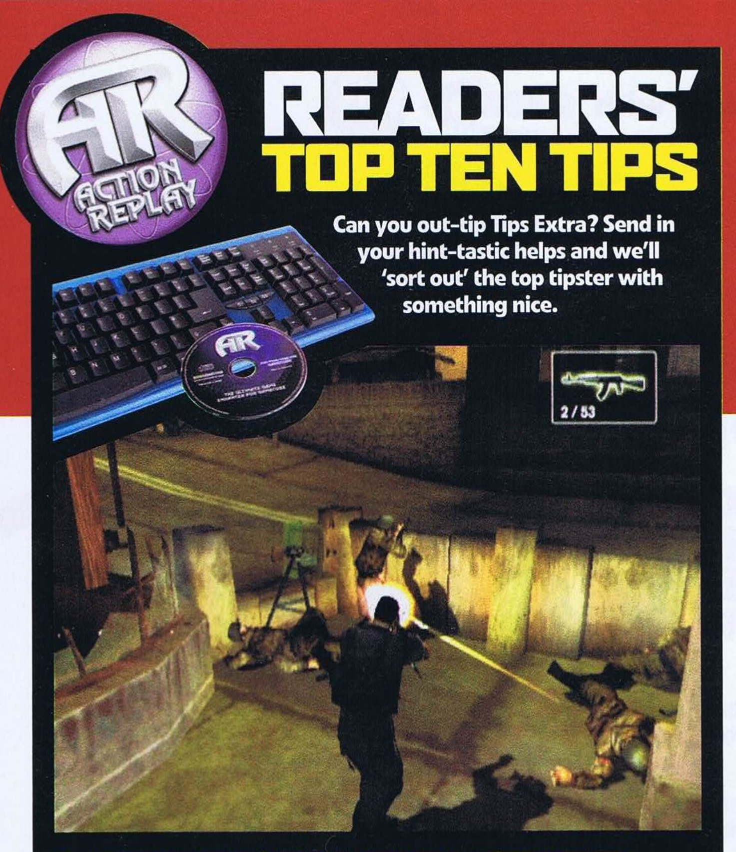
PLAYER'S CHOICE MINIGAMES

BUILDING JUMP
Select Load Game from the main menu. Select the character icon that has the Training Construct unlocked and choose Sparks Training Construct from the Level Select screen. At the beginning of the Training Construct level, go through the first brown door on the left side of the screen. Go to the button icon on the left side of the wall and press the square button. The objective is to collect as many rings as you can in two and a half minutes.

SNIPER GAME
Select Load Game from the main menu. Select the character icon that has the Training Construct unlocked and choose Sparks Training Construct from the Level Select screen. At the beginning of the Training Construct level, go through the first brown door on the left-hand side of the screen like you did to find the Building minigame. Walk over to the button icon on the *right* side of the wall this time and press the square button. The objective of the sniper minigame is to shoot all three S.W.A.T. members when the window opens. If you fail to hit a S.W.A.T member and the window closes, the game will end.

READERS' TOP TEN TIPS

Can you out-tip Tips Extra? Send in your hint-tastic helps and we'll 'sort out' the top tipster with something nice.



1. FREEDOM FIGHTERS

Prevention is the best cure

On levels where you have helipads or bridges, it's always best to take care of them first. It means that the helicopter gunships in other levels won't bother you and troop carriers won't keep dropping off soldiers every minute or so – so you'll greatly increase your chances of survival.
Pauline Edington, Shropshire

2. MARIO KART DD

Sands of time

When you're on the Peach Beach course, if you decide not to take the shortcut jump, drive as close to the edge of the water as you can. When the tide's out you can cut loads of distance (and time) off your circuit.
Ben Gibbons, Bristol

3. ROBOTECH BATTLECRY

Invincibility

To get invincibility, start the game's training mode but only kill two enemies. Exit training and immediately start a story game – you'll now be invincible!
Casey Chadwick, Portsmouth

4. F-ZERO GX

Samurai ram raider

In the Story mode, the best way to do the canyon level (where you have those falling boulders) is to knock Goroh off the side right at the start. Just keep retrying until you do it, then cruise to the finish.
Emma Cullen, Stockport

5. FINAL FANTASY CC

Back from the dead

On any tough boss give the strongest member of your team all your Phoenix Downs and get them to stand there slashing away. This lets everyone else concentrate on focus attacks and magic.
Tim Lee, Bristol

6. HARVEST MOON AWL

Rare fishy

Just to let you know – I found the rarest fish in the game, Big Sharshark, at the Lower River by the bridge on a good horoscope day. You get 1,200g for it.
Ali Brown, Cheltenham

7. FINAL FANTASY CC

Flower power

Go to Daemon's Court and blow up the bridge there. Finish the level and head back in and do it again. Now go to Connall Curach and find the Pressed Flower. This will let you make the flower bracer, which regenerates health faster.
Rich Hendy, Eastbourne

8. POKÉMON CHANNEL

Must… resist…

If, like me, you were tempted to buy *Pokémon Channel* after reading disparaging review scores give yourself a good, hard punch in the face…
Daniel Cook, Newcastle

9. RESIDENT EVIL

Crow bug

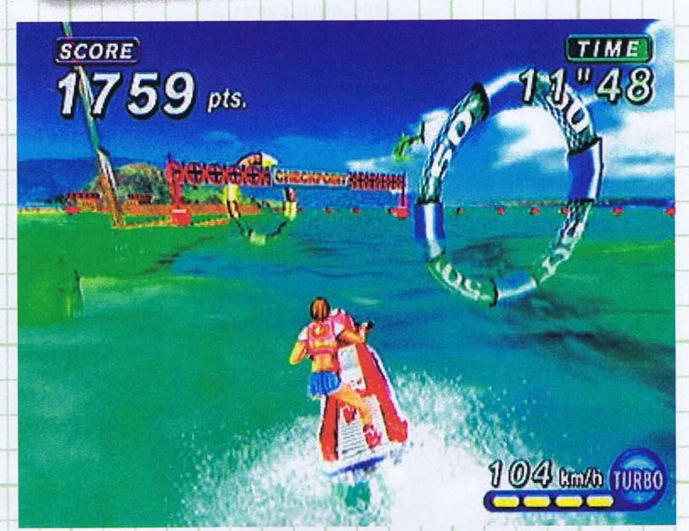
In the room full of crows, enter, shoot one and exit. When you go back in the crows won't attack you, letting you pick them off easily.
Jamie Cutler, Llechryd

10. METAL GEAR SOLID

Liquid Glitch

When Ocelot shoots your PAL card, walk out of room and then right so you face Metal Gear Rex. Fire a Nikita rocket, send it up past Rex's head and, at the Nikita's highest point turn to face the control room. Fly there and you will see that Liquid has a head and torso but the rest is missing!
Davey-D, email





Getting ready for some glove-to-buttock interfacing…

Dr Kitts,
How do I unlock the La Razza Canal in Time Attack mode on *Wave Race: Blue Storm*?
James P, email

Dr Kitts doesn't want a lover. He just needs a friend…
Go to the Options screen and and hit Start, Z and Y. This will bring up a password screen. Now enter MJV8LKL6 and La Razza Canal will be all yours.

Dr Kitts,
In *Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles* I need to get over the Jegon River but it's all dried up and no matter how many times I move the game's cycle on, it won't start flowing again. How the hell do I cross it? I'm going out of my mind.
Laurence Oxford, Solihull

It's Dr Kitts' party – and he'll cry if he wants to…
We know how you feel – but if you had read our complete (not to mention free) guide a couple of months back you wouldn't have this problem, would you? Anyway. To get the Jegon River flowing you need to make your way over to Shella. Head to the northernmost point of the village and you'll find a Yuke Professor giving a talk about the flowers in Veo Lui Sluice. Now head over to Veo Lui Sluice and you'll find the reservoirs have also dried up. Find the flower roots that you saw in Shella and cast Life (or use a Phoenix Down) on them. Now finish the level by killing the boss and you'll find the river is back to normal.

Dr Kitts,
In *F-Zero GX*, I can't beat the final Story mode chapter on Very Hard. It's the only one I've got left to finish and it's driving me nuts. How the hell do I beat that ghost ship?
Matt, email

Dr Kitts is a model. And he's looking good…
This is extremely tough. Practice is the most important thing. Memorise the track until you're confident you can get around it with 70-100% max speed without falling off every time. Once you've mastered this, the only tricky bit is your boosting strategy. We found the best way to beat him was to hang back behind the ghost car and learn where and when he boosts. If you copy him exactly, you'll normally have two to three boosts left over for the final stretch of the course, just about giving you the edge – and hopefully the lead.







Bins of food for your inner tramp.

HARVEST MOON: A WONDERFUL LIFE

Master code
DZPG-46VJ-F4HQX
PQ6B-GQ3Z-DR9RE

Tons of cash
V6G5-81UN-9V538
AD31-EUPB-VE0WF

Never exhausted
UE4H-NM5G-X3Y25
V40A-707X-3WDHN

Never hungry
GJ9D-Z1Y6-BC4ZU
BNX9-AP59-ATW75

Always food for the animals in the barn
C02E-KR6D-KEF0A
35RE-ENZE-8DYRW

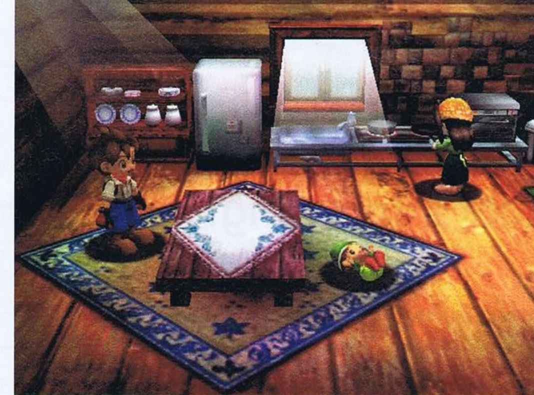
Always food for the chickens
JXP1-BN18-EY0X1
DRDE-AJA3-61HKB

Food bins full of food
DDDH-MVE5-11T57
T0BR-EPWK-MP6VE

Food bins full of good food
FNYT-XB16-DMZZG
FX75-YR4Y-JH8ZY

All tools in the shed
A4UX-YY5F-RP7VV
ZYW2-5EDV-16KJ8
6XFM-4YGX-PPGKR





SPHINX AND THE CURSED MUMMY

Master code
RVK2-0FUQ-7GVQK
YVT1-XUU2-Y8HHJ

Infinite health
8JW8-KCCX-M8B9C
QXZT-4FN0-EG6VR

Able to walk across lava
PR1X-3TXG-KJBQV
UTJ8-DW7A-3FGQB

Moon jump (Hold A)
U7U4-VDBY-3KE4T
HZFE-WKH1-AAFP9
RW3B-BFEA-GW1PF

Grow Sphinx (Press L+Y)
PE2X-G1ZZ-00B6A
QJA5-RT9F-P7AXP
AGEE-DTP8-YAUKU
6WUY-VWTQ-V02PC
K5KD-K9UK-5K8XM
WRA9-FFCR-9HYN6
E9FZ-A3QA-YCERP

Shrink Sphinx (Press L+X)
W25P-C527-8Y7TJ
GRC6-PJCH-1UEN3
VR7W-ZZG0-PFP2R
TX28-R2AQ-QYEK3
3QM0-D9T4-HQ86X
62A7-BZUE-X1JBR
E9FZ-A3QA-YCERP

BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL

Master code
67NW-BQ0Y-BKKVU
6W3J-YDBA-Q394C

Infinite health: Jade
BKBQ-GKVX-1MC5X
CF9J-0YKH-0YA0B

Infinite health: Uncle Pey'j
2VQJ-R7W5-D8GF5
HV9C-Z801-U3RBK

Maximum/infinite credits
V607-6HTB-WDUC0
ZZB3-GG9G-BQUUU

Maximum/infinite starkos
R6J9-7BE7-C79EQ
X7VU-CZR3-JGKPA

Have maximum/infinite super attack
47HF-NRQE-WK6R5
X7VU-CZR3-JGKPA

Have digital zoom on Jade's camera
BCH5-8T57-BHG93
XZGH-EXMM-5Q1PZ

Have all MDisks
BHGE-8Q7Z-C1G5Q
WP4Q-HWHN-F63E3

NGC YOUR TOP TIPS

YOUR TOP TIPS SHARE THE KNOWLEDGE AND BAG YOURSELF A PRIZE...

HERE'S MY TOP TIP...

IT'S FOR

AND THIS IS HOW IT WORKS

Name ....

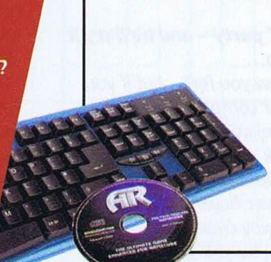
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Send to:
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or e-mail ngc@futurenet.co.uk

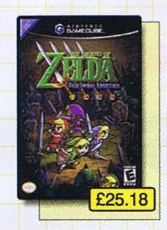
If you don't want to cut up your magazine, send a photocopy instead, and continue on another bit of paper if you run out of room. Or just buy two copies of the mag. That way you can keep a spare copy in the khazi, to help focus your mind.

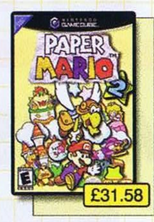
Found an interesting tip, secret or quirky thing in one of your games? Send it into us immediately! Each month we'll stick the best into our Readers' Tips section. If your tip is the number one readers' tip, we'll send you a luvverly prize. Good, huh? But don't send us cheat codes from the net. Quirky!



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GAMECUBE XBOX PS2 GAME BOY ADVANCE PC IMPORTS





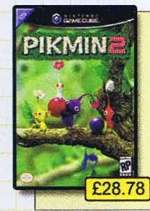


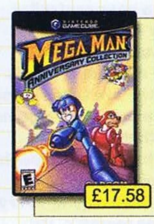
















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I'M THE BEST

WIN!

Prolonged exposure to the sun can cause skin cancer and wrinkles, you know. Which is why we here at **NGC** have devised I'm The Best, a pleasant way to stay healthy by avoiding those terrible solar death rays and staying indoors to play games instead. (Okay, that may not be the real reason, but you can point out to your mates that you don't want skin cancer, so it's far better for you to play games than to go outdoors in the summer and run around.) And if you don't believe that games will keep you young, just look at Geraint – face of a 12-year-old, body of a very old man. Yes, games are indeed the fountain of eternal youth, or at least the dripping tap of drawn-out adolescence.

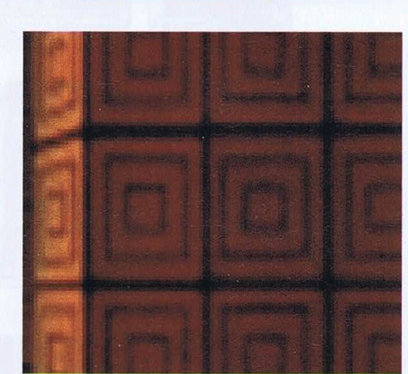
So, whether you're a health freak or a games fanatic, it's not too late to join in the fun of I'm The Best.

First, read through the challenges and see which ones you can do, making sure that you follow the rules of each challenge and that you can send in the appropriate evidence.

Next, look at page 95 for details on how to get suitable evidence of your gaming prowess, then follow the instructions in the red box below to submit your entry. It really is that simple! And we look forward to having you join in…

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE!

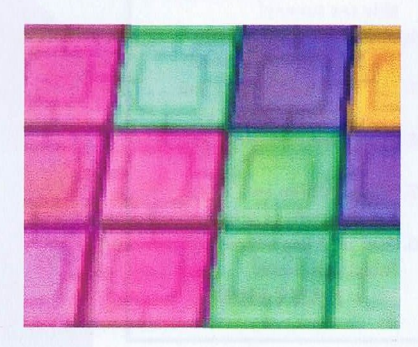
Mission Impossible is the part of I'm The Best where we make you put down your controller and think for a little while – a novel idea, but it seems to work. We could show you a bunch of pixels and ask you which game they're taken from. We could give you some speech from a game and ask you to name it. Whatever we do, though, you can be sure that it's a thorough test of your Nintendo gaming knowledge. And there's a new one to have a go at every issue, so if you can't do one month's, try again a month later.



THIS MONTH… TEXTURE HUNT

Yes, it's the return of everyone's favourite picture puzzle as we ask you to identify the four games these shots are taken from. Easy in some cases, third-level-of-*Ikaruga*-difficult in others (and no, that's not a clue – none of them are from *Ikaruga*!). We're not asking you to tell us the levels, date of release or anything like that, just the game name.

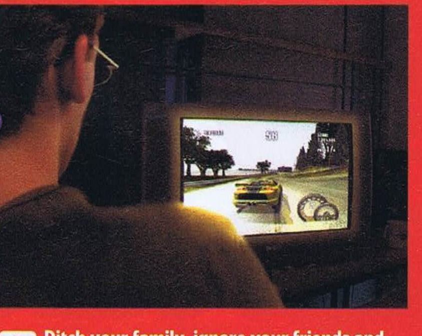
Send all four answers by the 21st June please. Completely correct answers will net the sender 40 points.



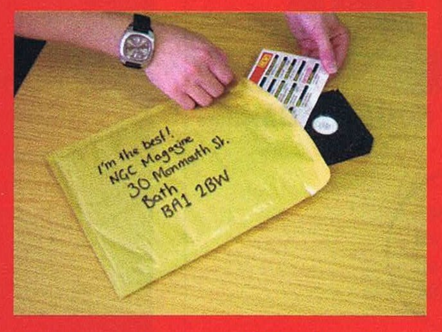


BEAT THE BEST!

Come and have a go if you think they're hard enough! This is how you turn your talent into a shot at a stonking prize.



1 Ditch your family, ignore your friends and practise until you have achieved perfection. But not beyond the cut-off date. That'd be dim.



2 Get a score above our 'To Qualify' minimum – you don't have to beat the top 5. Gather the evidence (video/photo) and send it to us.



3 Wait an issue or two and see where your score gets you. The more challenges you nail, the higher you climb in the table…

SUPER SMASH BROS. MELEE





KIRBY'S REVENGE

WE WANT Your highest numbers of KOs.
THE LAW Play in Cruel Melee mode. You must play as Kirby. All default settings apply otherwise.
TO QUALIFY Four Knock Outs.
EVIDENCE Photographic evidence will do fine.
POINTS 25

1	15	**David Lent**, Leeds
2	11	**Rob Jones**, Poole
3	10	**Chris Mills**, Warrington; **S. Brooks**, Broughton Astley
4	9	**Rex McGee**, Trowbridge
5	6	**M. Heule**, The Netherlands; **Ewan McKenzie**, Dumfries

ROCK ME, AMADEUS

WE WANT Your highest score in All-Star mode.
THE LAW Must use Falco. Singing in an 80s-stylee completely optional.
TO QUALIFY 400,000
EVIDENCE Again, we're fine with photos for this one, as long as it's clear enough for us to see your score.
POINTS 20

1	982,100	**Steve Brooks**, Broughton Astley
2	831,000	**Rob Jones**, Poole
3	767,910	**Rex McGee**, Trowbridge
4	745,910	**Dave Every**, Ellesmere Port
5	667,710	**Ben Bryce**, Worthing

To spice things up a bit, you'll notice that we've also included extra Random Challenges – which can be related to games, or be completely whimsical. Again, fulfil our wishes to the letter and points will be yours. Simple. There's even a Spot the Ball competition (it's *Tiger Woods 2003* this month). Keray-zee…

TIMESPLITTERS 2





BRICKATHON

WE WANT Your fastest time for completing the Bricking It: Glass Smash.
THE LAW You'll find it in Challenge mode. No cheating.
TO QUALIFY 25s
EVIDENCE Video of the entire run so we can see you doing it.
POINTS 25

1	19.4	**Bryan Docherty**, Inverkip
2	19.7	**Peter Bottomley**, Holmes Chapel
3	20.0	**Rex McGee**, Trowbridge
4	21.6	**Lewis Voigtländer-Ford**, Milton Keynes
5	22.7	**Andrew Grieve**, Rotherham

IRREPRESSIBLE!

WE WANT You to complete the Banana Chomp: Playing With Fire.
THE LAW You have to complete the level.
TO QUALIFY 20 bananas
EVIDENCE Full video evidence of the entire run so we can see you don't duck out halfway.
POINTS 35

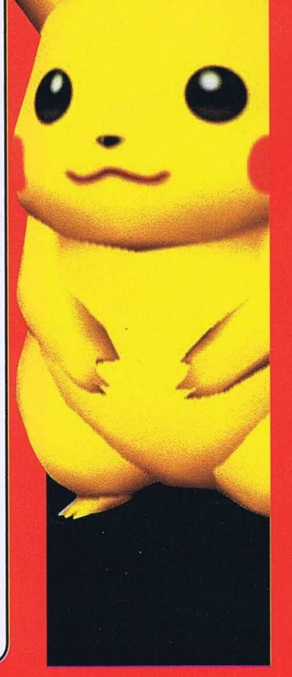
1	26	**Peter Bottomley**, Holmes Chapel
2	25	**Lewis Voigtländer-Ford**, Milton Keynes
3	24	**S. Flatman**, Northampton; **Rex McGee**, Trowbridge; **Andrew Grieve**, Rotherham; **Dave Pugh**, Saffron Walden; **Josh Symons**, Bristol
4	22	**Dominic Stroud**, Gloucestershire

VIRTUAL REALITY YOU!

Because prats win prizes!

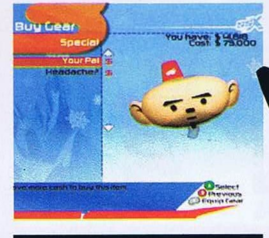
THIS MONTH PIKACHUMP

Ah, you must have been expecting us to make you do this one sooner or later. We want you to be photographed next to a display of televisions dressed as ***Pokémon Channel's* square-eyes, Pikachu.** If you're going to go into a shop for this, check that it's okay for you to do so first – don't enter the shop wearing a mask or head covering, if that's what your costume involves. All photos must arrive by 21st June.



SSX3





MILLIONAIRE

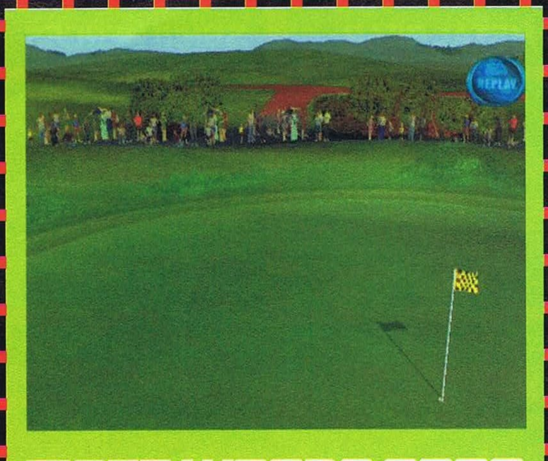
WE WANT Your best score for Peak 3.
THE LAW Must be done in Freestyle mode (All Peak Jam). Can use any of the starting boarders – no unlockable or created ones.
TO QUALIFY 1,000,000
EVIDENCE A photo will do for this.
POINTS 25

1	3,260,182	**Dermot Ryan**, Mullingar
2	3,011,057	**Dave Pugh**, Saffron Walden
3	2,091,290	**Steve Brooks**, Broughton Astley
4	1,435,909	**Rex McGee**, Trowbridge
5	1,261,244	**Peter Bottomley**, Holmes Chapel

WITH JAM ON

WE WANT Your fastest time on Peak 1 Race: Snow Jam.
THE LAW Must use Kaori – no other boarders allowed. You must cross the line first as well.
TO QUALIFY 2:35
EVIDENCE We'd like to see video evidence of the full run, please.
POINTS 35

1	2:08	**Dave Pugh**, Saffron Walden
2	2:21	**Peter Bottomley**, Holmes Chapel
3	2:33	**Rex McGee**, Trowbridge
3	2:33	**Dermot Ryan**, Mullingar
4	2:35	**Andrew Grieve**, Rotherham



TIGER WOODS 2003 SPOT THE BALL

X MARKS THE SPOT

He's a Tiger! Grr! But, as everyone with an interest in cool cats knows, Tigers have excellent camouflage in long grass and so do their balls. Ahem. The plus-four-toting Mr Woods has belted his ball somewhere into the distance and we want you to tell us where it is. All you have to do is put an X where you think the ball might be. It's that simple. (And, in case you're feeling opportunistic, we go on the centre of your X, so don't think that scrawling down one an inch wide will make you more likely to win.)

❑ The entry we receive marking the point closest to the ball by the 21st June wins **40 points.**

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO… I'M THE BEST, NGC MAGAZINE, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW

I'M THE BEST

The Best just got even Better…

MARIO PARTY 5



PANIC STATIONS

WE WANT Your highest score on Panic Pinball.
THE LAW You must use Waluigi. We feel sorry for him as he gets left out. Apart from that, stick to all the default settings. One player.
TO QUALIFY 22,000 points
EVIDENCE A snap of the screen showing your score.
POINTS 30

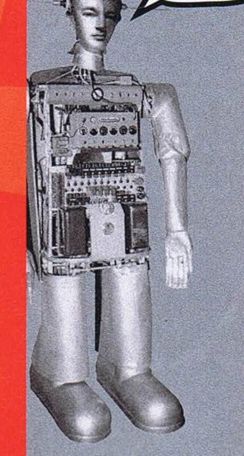
1	30,400	Steve Brooks, Broughton Astley
2	28,940	Michael Rothwell, Wallasey
3	28,760	Rex McGee, Trowbridge
4	??,???	Your name here? Next month
5	??,???	Your name here? Next month



JUMP! JUMP! JUMP!

WE WANT Your furthest distance for Leaf Leap.
THE LAW You can use any character you like. Apart from that, the default settings apply.
TO QUALIFY 120m
EVIDENCE We'd like to see the whole entertaining incident on video, please.
POINTS 20

1	144	Steve Brooks, Broughton Astley
2	141	Ewan McKenzie, Dumfries
2	141	Mark Gibson, Dumfries
3	129	Rex McGee, Trowbridge
4	???	Your name here? Next month



DAVID GOSEN'S INHUMAN GAMING EFFICIENCY DIRECTIVE

Pathetic humans! The sustained performance of a fine piece of metal eludes your feebly fleshy physicality.

Playing Sonic Heroes in Challenge mode, I want you to play as Sonic Team and get a total time of under 80 minutes across all levels. I will require a shot of the end of each level clearly showing the time of completion – so you must send me photos or video of the end of all 14 levels.I do not give a 10101NUBBINS01 how many rings you collect.

Only entries in by the 21st June will comply with the directive. Your reward for machinelike endurance and reliability will be 101.01 points.

KIRBY AIR RIDE

STRAIGHT RACE

WE WANT Your fastest time for a three-lap race.
THE LAW Must race on the Metal Top Ride. Three CPU opponents, level 1.
TO QUALIFY 50 seconds. You can do that!
EVIDENCE Video, so we can check that you've got the settings right.
POINTS 25

1	0'26"93	Steve Brooks, Broughton Astley
2	??	Your name here? Next month
3	??	Your name here? Next month
4	??	Your name here? Next month
5	??	Your name here? Next month

DEEP BREATHS

WE WANT To see how many enemies Kirbs can hoover up during a race.
THE LAW You can attempt this on any level and vehicle you like. Must use default settings. You must win.
TO QUALIFY 15
EVIDENCE Video evidence of Kirby absorbing his rivals.
POINTS 35

1	16	Steve Brooks, Broughton Astley
2	??	Your name here? Next month
3	??	Your name here? Next month
4	??	Your name here? Next month
5	??	Your name here? Next month

METAL GEAR



WOOOAH NELLY!

WE WANT You to kick Liquid Snake's treacherous, traitorous butt.
THE LAW No using cheats to give Snake an advantage.
TO QUALIFY 30 seconds left on the clock. You only have three to beat Liquid anyway…
EVIDENCE Clear video of the full battle.
POINTS 40

1	1:37	Lewis Voigtländer-Ford, Milton Keynes
2	1:30	Steve Brooks, Broughton Astley
3	1:17	Michael Rothwell, Wallasey
4	1:16	Andrew Grieve, Rotherham
5	??	Your name here? Next month

SONIC HEROES



MISSION POSSIBLE

WE WANT Your best score on the bizarre Casino Park stage (level 5).
THE LAW Must be playing as Team Sonic. No Chaotix or (shame on you if you thought of it) Team Rose!
TO QUALIFY 35,000
EVIDENCE A clear snap of your score at the end of the level.
POINTS 30

1	43,370	Dermot Ryan, Mullingar
2	40,300	Mark Gibson, Dumfries
3	39,550	Tim Osborne, Newcastle-under-Lyme
4	39,490	Andrew Grieve, Rotherham
5	38,300	Ewan McKenzie, Dumfries

MARIO KART



DESERT DRAG

WE WANT Your *slowest* time on Dry Dry Desert.
THE LAW Must play as Yoshi and Baby Bowser. And despite going slowly, you've still got to win the race! 100cc only.
TO QUALIFY 2:00
EVIDENCE Video of the full race – sorry, but we do get people cheating at *MK*.
POINTS 30

1	2:43:273	Mark Gibson, Dumfries
2	2:42:571	Ben Bryce, Worthing
3	2:39:110	Simon Flatman, Northampton
4	2:37:875	Tim Osborne, Newcastle-under-Lyme
5	2:37:404	Dave Pugh, Saffron Walden

MARIO SUNSH…



SOLID GOLD

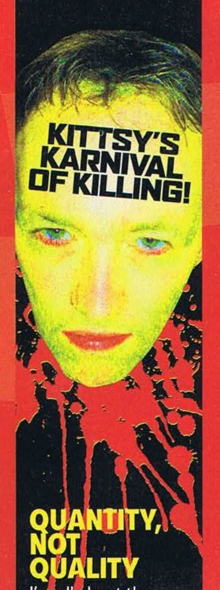
WE WANT To know how many coins you can collect.
THE LAW Collect them on any story you like, as long as it's on the Noki Bay level.
TO QUALIFY 110 coins
EVIDENCE A picture of the totals screen (press Z to see it) clearly showing your coin haul for the location.
POINTS 20

1	224	Lewis Voigtländer-Ford, Milton Keynes
2	210	Peter Bottomley, Holmes Chapel
3	190	Rex McGee, Trowbridge
4	188	Martijn Heule, The Netherlands
5	184	Mark Gibson, Dumfries

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO… I'M THE BEST, NGC MAGAZINE, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW

I'M THE BEST

The Best just got even Better…



QUANTITY, NOT QUALITY

I'm all about the volume, me. I want my blood in pints, not shot glasses. I want my meat by the wheelbarrow load, not pre-packaged in little tubs. **I want you to get at least 30 kills in *Soul Calibur 2's* Extra Survival: sudden Death mode.** A photograph of the end screen will suffice. Send it to me by the 21st June to win **40 points**.

1080° AVALANCHE



NEW SCORE LIMIT!

GATE EXPECTATIONS

WE WANT Your highest score on the Frosty Shadows Gate Challenge.
THE LAW Must play as one of the boarders available from the start of the game. Default settings apply.
TO QUALIFY 17,500
EVIDENCE Video evidence of your run.
POINTS 25

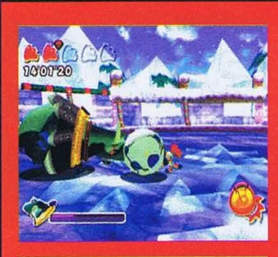
1	26,219	**Bryan Docherty** Inverkip
2	25,079	**Andrew Grieve** Rotherham
3	24,699	**Andrew Mills** Dundee
4	24,067	**Tim Osborne** Newcastle-under-Lyme
5	23,689	**Dave Pugh** Saffron Walden

SNOW COMPETITION

WE WANT To see how well you can do on the half pipe.
THE LAW Can be any of the boarders available from the start of the game. Must tackle the half pipe in Trick Attack mode.
TO QUALIFY 30,000
EVIDENCE Video evidence of the run in action.
POINTS 35

1	???,???	**Your name here?** Next month
2	???,???	**Your name here?** Next month
3	???,???	**Your name here?** Next month
4	???,???	**Your name here?** Next month
5	???,???	**Your name here?** Next month

BILLY HATCHER



EGG ROLL

WE WANT Your highest combo kill with one egg roll, (not your highest combo, one roll).
THE LAW Can play as any character, on any level. Can use any old egg you like too. Isn't that nice?
TO QUALIFY 7
EVIDENCE Video of the roll.
POINTS 30

1	99	**Dermot Ryan; Mark Gibson; Rex McGee, Peter Bottomley, Bryan Docherty, Dave Pugh**
2	35	**Andrew Grieve** Rotherham
3	26	**Dave Every** Ellesmere Port
4	8	**Ewan McKenzie,** Dumfries
5	??	**Your name here?**

EAT CROW

WE WANT Your top time for defeating the 100 crows in mission 3: Dino Mountain .
THE LAW Can use no more than eight eggs. Must play as Billy. Must get an S-rank.
TO QUALIFY 10 minutes
EVIDENCE Full video run so we can see how many eggs you use for the level.
POINTS 30

1	2:21:26	**Peter Bottomley** Holmes Chapel
2	2:22:22	**Rex McGee** Trowbridge
3	2:27:58	**Bryan Docherty** Inverkip
4	2:50:40	**Andrew Grieve** Rotherham
5	3:15:24	**Dave Every** Ellesmere Port

WORMS 3D





AAAAARRRRR!

WE WANT To see how quickly you do Deathmatch Challenge 5.
THE LAW Of the jungle.
TO QUALIFY 10:00
EVIDENCE Video of the end of the level.
POINTS 20

1	6:24	**Rex McGee** Trowbridge
2	?'??	**Your name here?** Next month
3	?'??	**Your name here?** Next month
4	?'??	**Your name here?** Next month
5	?'??	**Your name here?** Next month

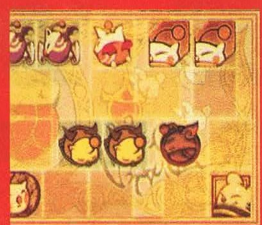
BAA HUMBUG

WE WANT Your best time for Super Sheep Challenge 2.
THE LAW Says it's illegal.
TO QUALIFY 4:00
EVIDENCE Video of the end of the level.
POINTS 25

1	5:10	**Simon Flatman** Northampton
1	5:10	**Rex McGee** Trowbridge
2	5:24	**Dave Pugh** Saffron Walden
3	?'??	**Your name here?** Next month
4	?'??	**Your name here?** Next month

FINAL FANTASY CC





DOWN AND OUT

WE WANT You to beat the Orc King (the Mine of Cathurgies boss).
THE LAW Single-player. Must be done on Myrrh Cycle Two. No Phoenix Downs allowed. That aside, anything goes.
TO QUALIFY 3 minutes
EVIDENCE Video.
POINTS 40

1	2'05"	**Andrew Grieve** Rotherham
2	??	**Your name here?** Next month
3	??	**Your name here?** Next month
4	??	**Your name here?** Next month
5	??	**Your name here?** Next month

MOOGLE SEARCH

WE WANT You to get as many Moogle stamps as you can.
THE LAW Must be in single-player for full points. If you do it in multiplayer, you'll get the appropriate fraction.
TO QUALIFY 10 stamps
EVIDENCE A snap of your Moogle card.
POINTS 20

1	23	**Dave Every** Ellesmere Port
2	15	**Martijn Heule** The Netherlands
2	15	**Simon Flatman** Northampton
3	14	**Mark Gibson** Dumfries
4	12	**Michael Rothwell** Wallasey

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO… I'M THE BEST, NGC MAGAZINE, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW

I'M THE BEST

The Best just got even Better…

ZELDA WW



GOING POSTAL

WE WANT You to sort as many letters as you can in the letter-sorting minigame on Dragon Roost Island.
THE LAW No cheating. We *will* spot it.
TO QUALIFY 15
EVIDENCE Full video of your postmastery, so we can gaze awestruck at your skills.
POINTS 30

1	32	**Dave Every** Ellesmere Port
2	30	**Andrew Mills**, Dundee **Simon Flatman**, Northampton
3	29	**Bryan Docherty** Inverkip
4	28	**Dominic Stroud**, Glouc, **L. Voigtländer-Ford**, M. Keynes
5	27	**Mark Gibson**, Dumfries **Dermot Ryan**, Mullingar, **Adam Pollard**, Dorset

PIKMIN



GROWMIN

WE WANT To see how many Pikmin you can sprout in The Final Trial.
THE LAW Of the jungle.
TO QUALIFY 150
EVIDENCE A shot of the final level results screen so we can see how many Min you grew during the level. Make sure it's a clear one.
POINTS 30

1	206	**Dermot Ryan** Mullingar
2	201	**Dave Every** Ellesmere Port
3	199	**Steve Brooks** Broughton Astley
4	197	**Dave Pugh** Saffron Walden
5	192	**Rex McGee** Trowbridge



SHINE ON

You crazy diamond…

How fast can you go? We're putting your speed skills to the test – we want your fastest time in *F-Zero GX's* Time Attack mode for the track Aeropolis: Dragon Slope. Everyone who does it in under 3:05:000 will get 20 points, and the fastest racer of all will get an extra 15. Send us a shot of the records screen by the 21st June as proof.

ENTRY FORM



Name ....

Address ....

Postcode ....

If you don't want to cut up your magazine, send a photocopy instead, and continue on another bit of paper if you run out of room. Defaced or illegible papers will be disqualified and burned in the furnaces of Hell, *pour encourager les autres.*

SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE
- ❑ KIRBY'S REVENGE ....
- ❑ ROCK ME ....

TIMESPLITTERS 2
- ❑ BRICKATHON ....
- ❑ IRREPRESSIBLE! ....

SSX 3
- ❑ MILLIONAIRE ....
- ❑ WITH JAM ON ....

MARIO PARTY 5
- ❑ PANIC STATIONS ....
- ❑ JUMP! JUMP! ....

KIRBY AIR RIDE
- ❑ STRAIGHT RACE ....
- ❑ DEEP BREATHS ....

1080° AVALANCHE
- ❑ GATE EXPECTATIONS ....
- ❑ SNOW COMP. ....

BILLY HATCHER
- ❑ EGG ROLL ....
- ❑ DINO BUNDLE ....

WORMS 3D
- ❑ AAAARRRRR! ....
- ❑ BAA HUMBUG ....

METAL GEAR: TWIN SNAKES
- ❑ WOOOAH NELLY! ....

SONIC HEROES
- ❑ MISSION POSSIBLE ....

MARIO KART
- ❑ DESERT DRAG ....

SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE
- ❑ SOLID GOLD ....

ZELDA WIND WAKER
- ❑ GOING POSTAL ....

PIKMIN
- ❑ GROWMIN ....

FINAL FANTASY CC
- ❑ DOWN AND OUT ....
- ❑ MOOGLE SEARCH ....

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO… I'M THE BEST, NGC MAGAZINE, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW

THE LEADERBOARD
WHERE ARE YOU NOW?…

1	**Rex McGee** Trowbridge	**4258.03pts**
2	**Steve Brooks** Broughton Astley	**2770.05pts**
3	**Dave Pugh** Saffron Walden	**2498.03pts**
4	**Dave Every** Ellesmere Port	**2184.04pts**
5	**Andrew Grieve** Rotherham	**2148.03pts**



6	**Bryan Docherty** Inverkip	**2113.03pts**
7	**Peter Bottomley** Cheshire	**1787.02pts**
8	**Andrew Mills** Dundee	**1773.03pts**
9	**Rob Jones** Poole	**1747.02pts**
10	**Dermot Ryan** Mullingar	**1603.03pts**
11	**Ewan McKenzie** Dumfries	**1566.01pts**
12	**Martijn Heule** The Netherlands	**1552.02pts**
13	**Michael Rothwell** Wallasey	**1547.02pts**
14	**Phil Hughes** Cheshire	**1527.02pts**
15	**Chris "plasticcoated" Fletcher** Stockport	**1482.02pts**
16	**Lewis Voigtländer-Ford** Milton Keynes	**1205pts**
17	**Dominic Stroud** Gloucester	**1076.01pts**
18	**Mark Gibson** Dumfries	**921.01pts**
19	**David Lent** Leeds	**720pts**
20	**Simon Mason** West Parley	**691.01pts**
21	**Michael Seaward** Stanley	**626.01pts**
22	**Dean Hailstone** Jarrow	**562.02pts**
23	**Barry Lewis** Dairsie	**560pts**
24	**Ben Bryce** Worthing	**556.01pts**
25	**Adam Pollard** Dorset	**535pts**
26	**Christoffer Lindgren** Sweden	**526.01pts**
27	**Scott Littlewood** Norwich	**445pts**
28	**David Williamson** Bathgate	**440pts**
29	**Steven Limm** Tamworth	**436.01pts**
30	**Eskil Vestre** Norway	**430pts**
31	**Andreas Nakkerud** Norway	**420pts**
32	**Daniel Sneddon** Bingley	**401.01pts**
33	**Gordon Yeung** Cardiff	**386.01pts**
34	**Josh Jones** Barnstaple	**380pts**
35	**Andrew McGrae** Southport	**330pts**
36	**Gareth Brownlow** Kilrea	**325pts**
37	**Mr S** Aberdare	**315pts**
38	**Mark Puddifoot** Swindon	**280pts**
39	**Toby Lynch** London	**260pts**
40	**Michael Robinson** Cumbria	**256.01pts**
41	**Tim Osborne** Newcastle-under-Lyme	**255pts**
42	**Alasdair Campbell** Elston	**250pts**
43	**Thomas Cox** Birchington, **Josh Symons** Bristol	**240pts**
44	**Banjo-Fella, Sam Rogerson** Milton Keynes	**235pts**
45	**Hollie Eggleton** Trowbridge	**230pts**
46	**Julia McClay** Langley Middleton **Jason Leverett** Great Yarmouth	**220pts**
47	**Harold Rooney-Nugent** London, **David McDonald** Warwick	**215pts**
48	**James "Yellow Dart" Walker** Worthing	**205pts**
49	**Andy Whittle** Leigh	**191.01pts**
50	**Ian "PS" Steadman** Farnham Common	**206.01pts**
51	**David Gruber** Norwich	**200pts**
52	**Josh Ryan** Dursley, **Simon Flatman** Northampton	**190pts**
53	**Janne Kaitila** Finland, **Paul Gibb** Cheltenham	**185pts**
54	**Lee Graham** Bristol, **Robert Woodward** The Wirral	**180pts**
55	**Matthew Woof** Leamington Spa, **Luke Ingle** Huntingdon	**165pts**
56	**Daniel Livings** Watford**, Norman Glover** Cleveland,	**160pts**
57	**Adam Weston** Ballycranbeg	**150pts**
58	**Angelos Perlegkas** Athens	**145pts**
59	**Michael Harvey** Ellesmere Port, **Joe Gamble** Ilkley	**140pts**
60	**Grant David Taylor** Edinburgh, **Michael Daniels** Chatham	**135pts**

Each month, the totals will be totted up and balances displayed in the Big Table™. The top five spots at the end win goodies – Numero Uno gets not only planet-wide admiration, but hard material goods. We keep track of every entrant's scores, so you can boost your points each month and move onto or up the list. Send us your entry today!



PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Use a fast film (200 or 400 ASA).
2. If you're using a digicam then use a slower shutter speed.
3. Turn off the camera's flash (or cover it up) and draw the curtains.

PLEASE NOTE: Any doubts over the legality of your entry will lead to instant disqualification.

VIDEO TAPES

1. Plug the Gamecube TV lead into the Signal In socket of your video.
2. Connect the Signal Out socket on your video to your TV.
3. Find a spare channel on the video and search for the signal.
4. After recording the challenge, rewind the tape. We can't return tapes, sorry.

HEY! IT'S THE RETURN OF...

GAME ON!



You can't get more chocolate out of an empty box, nor can you watch a bit more of a film once the movie's over. But you can carry on having fun with games after you've completed them. Welcome to Game On, the part of the mag that has its games cake and eats it. And then eats it some more. **NGC** readers send us the challenges they've come up with to squeeze bonus enjoyment from old favourites. If you've got a Game On idea, send it to us – the sender of the best one receives a present from the depths of Ger's Lucky Drawers.

SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE







FLASH FLUDD

Adam Darker, Chester

Go to Delfino Plaza and get the turbo device. Now head over to where the policemen are and start speeding. You have to run past the following objects in the order we've written them: round the left side of the prison; over the sewer lid in front of the statue; along the white wooden walkways; past the red cannon; over the island; under the entrance to Ricco Harbour; past the statue; up the ramp leading to the entrance to Noki Bay; along the wet bit to the left of the ramp; under the bridge; and last of all, right round to the lighthouse. **You can take as long as you like to do this, but you can only crash 10 times** – more than that and you're not in the running for a medal.

CRASHES  **0–3**  **4–7**  **8–10**

FIFA 2004





FOUL FOOTIE

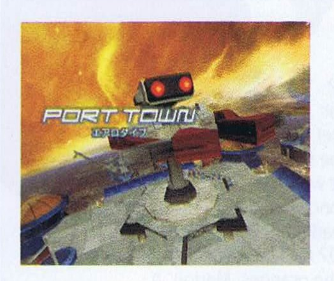
Alex Savage, London

Alex isn't going to be winning any fair play awards any time soon – not if he takes his challenge's ideals onto the pitch when he plays for real! His challenge is for you to **get four players sent off while scoring as many goals as possible**. And to make things even trickier, the difficulty level is World Class and the halves only last two minutes each, so you're aiming to get one player sent off every 60 seconds as well as score those goals. He says that "if you get five goals, you're a god, and if you get none you deserve to live in a skip". Harsh. But possibly justified.

GOALS  **10**  **6**  **2**



F-ZERO GX





FLY, MY PRETTY

Ross Mackay,
Glasgow

This, Ross tells us, is great fun. So let's all have a go at it! **Go to the Port Town Aero Dive track (in the Sapphire Cup) and, using the massive jump as a take-off point, see how many of the objects floating above the track you can fly through.** Ross also gave us some hints for the best chances of success – he recommends trying the challenge in Practice mode, driving the Queen Meteor and turning Free Run and Restore on. Also, make sure you've got no CPUs and that the ship is set to Max Speed.

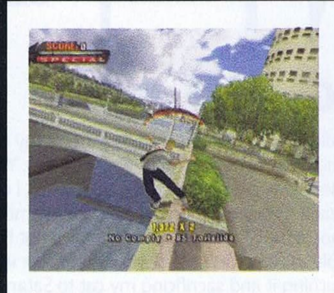
OBJECTS


TWO PANES & THE SPACESHIP


TWO PANES


ONE PANE

TONY HAWK'S UG





ROUND ROUND

Arthur Sayers,
Honiton

On the New Jersey level of *Tony Hawk's Underground*, go across the bridge where the police cars used to be (you can only do this if you successfully jumped over the bridge). You'll find a small circle that you can grind around for ages. But grinding relentlessly would get a bit dull, so what Arthur wants you to do is see how many times you can grind round it, with these conditions: **you have to pull at least two tricks on every circuit, each trick must be worth at least 1,000 points and you're not allowed to fall off**. How many circuits can you make?

CIRCLES


10


7


4

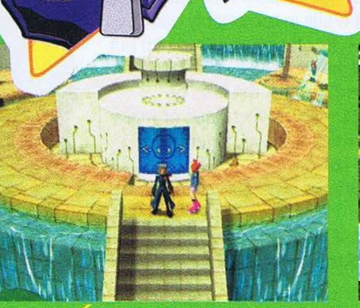
NGC CHALLENGES WANTED

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN…

Have you discovered a weird and wonderful new way to play Nintendo games? Can you sum it all up in about 100 words? If you have a challenge you'd like to share with other **NGC** readers, then we want to hear about it. Jot down a quick explanation of what you've got to do on a piece of paper, set three suitable levels of achievement for gold, silver and bronze medals, stick it in an envelope, and send it to…

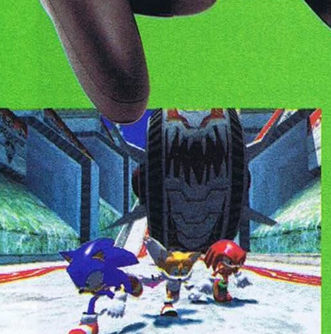
GAME ON, NGC Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Or email ngc@futurenet.co.uk, with Game On as the subject line.

We'll take challenges for absolutely any game on the good ol' 'Cube, but this month we're particularly interested in…


POKÉMON COLOSSEUM


MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE OPERATION SURMA


GOBLIN COMMANDER


SONIC HEROES

THE BEST GET PRINTED RIGHT HERE, AND OUR FAVOURITE CHALLENGE WILL WIN A SHINY NEW GAMECUBE GAME. DEAL?

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MAILBOX

EMAIL US!

Got something to say? Run out of stamps? Guards won't let you near a pen? Then log on to the interweb and 'get' us 'at'…

ngc@futurenet.co.uk

Include your *name and address* so we know who to credit the letter to. Do it! Do it! Do it now!



STAR LETTER

The winner of the Star Letter receives a bundle of gaming gear courtesy of Joytech, incorporating two Advanced Controllers, a gold-plated RGB Scart cable, an 8Mb memory card and a GC/GBA link cable. Mint!

'Back to basics'

Why are Nintendo constantly being criticised for their efforts on Gamecube? Three of their major franchises – *Zelda, Mario* and *Mario Kart* – have been criticised by self-proclaimed 'hardcore gamers', but I think that all three Gamecube instalments have been the best in the series so far, and this is coming from someone who's been a Nintendo fan since the NES days. As for *Zelda* – what are you complaining about? You get *OOT* free with it anyway.

The games industry is changing, and different developers take this in different ways. For example, EA are making their games more polished, precise and accurate – something that, for games like *FIFA* and *SSX*, is a good thing. For the Bond series, however, it is not. Nintendo, though, are evolving by going back to basics and making the experience fun, whatever that requires, and I, for one, think they've been right. Cel-shaded *Zelda*? Brilliant. Double-racer *Mario Kart*? Genius.

Dan Robinson, Skipton

We've seen some amazing GC games. The problem is that unlike three well-known N64 games, no GC title has been acclaimed as the Best Thing Ever. Not yet, anyway… Ed



'General anger'

Hello. I am writing to you to express my general anger towards several of your readers. You see, there was a time, loooong ago, when I enjoyed reading the collection of deplorable ramblings that is the Mailbox. But lately I have not been able to read this part of your magazine without burning it and sacrificing my cat to Satan over its ashes. The Stars Catalogue…

In almost every issue since the Stars Catalogue has existed people have been moaning and groaning about it, saying all they can buy are screensavers and T-shirt transfers. I do not have an account of stars in this evil catalogue and I never will because a) I can't be bothered and b) you, the trustworthy **NGC** team, have already said that it's filled up with donkey crap. If you people want to waste your stars on scat that sells out within five minutes then please do, just stop clogging up the Mailbox with your pathetic cries for sympathy and attention. Failure to comply will result in me taking a stroll through your place of residence with a shotgun. I've got a machine gun for Kittsy too. Good day.

Matthew Rudman, Gimingham

Here resteth the Stars Shatalogue debate. Ed

'Saved me the effort'

Why do they make Gamecube game cases so big, when the games are so tiny? It's crazy – they can fit regular-sized CDs in those cases. It would be a lot better having cases that were smaller so you could fit them in a smaller space and it would be different from the norm like the Xbox and PS2 cases. Okay, I know it's not the most important thing in the gaming world at the mo, and Nintendo have a lot more on their plates than to worry about the size of their game cases, but come on! All it would have taken was a little thought and imagination for far superior cases to be made and it would have saved me the effort of writing this letter.

Archie Swann, Somerset

It's not the size that counts. Ed

'DR & Quinch'

In issue 92, Kittsy reviews a retro-whimper called *Pitfall: The Lost Expedition*, and under one pic he says, "Mind the oranges, Marlon." This cryptic comment has caused me, rashly, to try to unravel the inner workings of the mind of Dr Kitts.

Was Kittsy thinking that some really old gamers would read the review? And that they (we) might be so old that we might once have read 2000AD? And so was "Mind the oranges, Marlon" a reference to the film by DR & Quinch?

And will there ever be a Jet Set Willy game on Gamecube?

James Hassall, Bristol

A cinematic soliloquy of citrus significance. Ed

Bonus Letters

Congratulations! You've proved my point and created a psychopath that will surely kill your parents in the next few weeks!
Thomas.McCloskey, via email
Delighted to be of service. Ed

Isn't Bowser like a flame thrower?
Ben Donnan, Ulverston
Yes. Yes he is. Ed

Why make more games when we can quickly port this one and make easy money?
Simon Hughes, Stevenage
Good point. Ed

Sonic may again compete with Mario.
Adam Kibbey, Dorchester
And dinosaurs may once again rule the world. Ed

I've been playing games since I was given my first Acorn Electron many many years ago.
T Brooks, Oxford
Acorn? That's edutainment! Ed

I've been playing Sonic since I was 3. All you can do is sit in an office and think of horrible things to say about Sonic when he's 100 times better then you can ever be.
Henry Cole, Hertfordshire
An entire year playing Sonic? Ed

'Killed a guard'

While I was playing *Metal Gear Solid* yesterday, I killed a guard in the level six holding cell and he died in a very dodgy position.

Lawrence Craddock, via email

Nice killing. Can anyone top that? Ed



'Past age'

I don't think that Nintendo making remakes of any N64 game for the Gamecube is the answer to anything. Instead of making remakes, why don't they release a device that attaches to the underside of the gamecube, and plays N64 (or possible even older NES or SNES) games? This would be great, as it would let everyone play their favourite titles of a past age on their new console! My N64 is still in reasonably good condition (for being six years old) but the controllers are falling to bits. I would love to play the likes of *Banjo-Kazooie, Perfect Dark*, or many other games that will never get a remake again.

Mark Nisbet, Galston

If it's N64 games you want, just wait until DS is released… Ed



HONOURABLE MENTIONS

Thanks to everyone who wrote in this month, including (but not limited to): Flic Yates, Kettering; Nathanael Rogers, Milton Keynes; Liam McCaffrey, Sheffield; Matthew Rudman, via email; Ryan Attrill, Isle of Wight; Pierre Hyde, Welwyn Garden City; Robin Andrews, London; James Pope, Liverpool; Ross Mackay, Glasgow; Stephen Tattersall, Oldham; Tom Ryan, Portsmouth; Carl McGruer, Cleghorn; Colm Laverty, Portadown; K Magson, Leighton Buzzard; Adam Kibbey, Dorchester; Adam Parker, Chester; K P Skillworth, Canterbury; Pete Geddes, Glasgow; Ahmad Al-Yawar, London; Robin Andrews, London; Ben Dawson, Hull;

'Not interested'

Why didn't you give *007 Everything or Nothing* a better mark? All of the other reviewers gave this game high grades, and told me to go out to the store and buy it. So I tried to convince my older brother to buy the game 'cause it was nearly as good as *GoldenEye*, but noooo! After your review he's not interested in the game.

Something like 85 or 88 would have been fair, but why only 68? I know I should read the review one more time, but I would like to know what you think about the other reviewers out there that rate this game highly? What do they see in *EON* that you don't? Or what do you see that all the others don't?
Richard Mortensen, Norway

We thought* Everything or Nothing *was triumph of style over substance. The money and effort that went into designing the (admittedly impressive) front end and hiring celebrities intentionally overshadowed the weak, generic gameplay. It's sold millions though – your brother must be one of the few discerning gamers who gave more credence to our review than to the expensive television adverts. Ed



'Throw in the towel'

I've been playing Nintendo games since the days of the first gold cartridge *Zelda*. Now I'm 42 and, despite complaints from my wife about it being a little juvenile, am still a totally confirmed Nintendo gamer.

I am increasingly concerned by the trend towards games that you can never finish. Contrary to popular belief, if there ever was a golden age of gaming, in my opinion it's now. Games have never been better and more rounded in their entertainment. But there are too many games that require a level of dedication that was not present in previous years. *Metroid* is a prime example. I really want to love this game – let's face it, it's gorgeous. But it's just too bloody hard. On more than one occasion I have had to throw in the towel and walk away from it for a month or two. I don't want to have to do this – I didn't have to with the inimitable *Super Metroid*. Same thing with *Mario Sunshine*. Too many levels are just too tough – *Yoshi's Island* wasn't like this. I never did get to see more than the first quarter of *Jet Force Gemini*. And this is just too frustrating.

But it's not all bad news. We have had absolute gems like *Pikmin*, *Burnout 2*, *Wind Waker* and now, in one glorious month, the sublime *Beyond Good and Evil* (destined already to become one of the most under-rated games of all time) and *Harvest Moon*. All games that you can dip into and out of with effortless ease, which is the sort of game us professionals need.

The answer? Well, how about a simple button on all game discs that switched it from 'rock hard' to just 'entertaining'. After all, that's what I've always spent my hard-earned cash on – games that might just prove entertaining.
Robin Howlett, Walsham-le-Willows

Alternatively… Ed



'Killed a guard'

Have games got easier to complete and shorter, or have I got better? Originally, *GoldenEye* took me months to complete, and I never did it on 00 Agent. I returned a couple of years after, and destroyed it.

I complete most games in less than 20 hours, but without 100%. I don't have the time or patience to complete a game by going through and getting every last item. Games need more meat less veg. I want to go somewhere, not stagger around the same place for hours looking for a hidden coin. Nintendo in the past have had a perfect blend, a meaty game with nice (optional) collecting quests. Now they just have no game!

Wind Waker was fantastic, but without the sailing, only about 10 hours. *Mario Sunshine* was great, but nothing compared to *Mario 64*. The lack of a jump in *Mario Kart: Double Dash* was a crime. The recent games have been great to play, but not magical gems to replay 5/6/7 times.
Steve Bowman, Bromley

Games are too easy nowadays? Games are too hard? My head hurts after all that arguing. Ed

'Stickers came'

Why didn't you review Capcom's sequel to *Viewtiful Joe*? You didn't even have a preview. Oh well, maybe it's because I couldn't wait much longer so I decided to make it on my own. Your *Viewtiful Joe* stickers came in very handy.
Jonathan Trier Brikner, Denmark

Viewtiful Sunshine, eh? Now that's an idea for a sequel. Ed

Bonus Letters

I had the urge to take a more gung-ho approach.
Alexander Hoffmann, Switzerland
Understandable. Ed

Unless I resort to lesbianism, there is not a snowman's chance in Hell that I'll play those games.
Sarah Lonsdale, Co. Durham
Yikes! Ed

That's just plain wrong.
Ian Ellis, North Wales
Certainly is. Ed

There really isn't much reason for it to exist
Niall Lovatt, Wellesbourne
Nope. Ed

Sonic Heroes is almost perfect with great graphics, sound and gameplay
Christopher Rogers, Greenford
If you like Sonic, you'll love Sonic Heroes. Groan. Ed

Who wants to rent *Batman* or *Scooby Doo*?
Edward Harper, via email
Ooh, me! Me! Me! Ed

I hate Tails almost as much as I hate Pikachu.
Adam Parker, Chester
That's a whole lotta hate. Ed

I was in Woolworths, looking at the games when a games chart caught my eye. I looked at it, and guess what was number 1? *Pokémon Channel*!
Niall Lovatt, via email
Where's the justice in that? Ed



CORRECTION CORNER

In issue 92's review of *Goblin Commander*, you printed a picture of *Pikmin* instead of *Advance Wars 2* in the 'If You Like This' box.
Spotted by around 200 readers…

You mean to say not one of you has seen the special* Pikmin *level at the end of* Advance Wars 2*? Ed

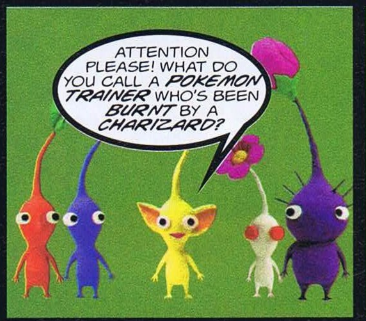
And as if that wasn't bad enough page 101 is messed up too, just read that circled bit! Doesn't look like *Pac-Man* to me. I bet Yamauchi would have something to say about that!
James Phillips, Swindon

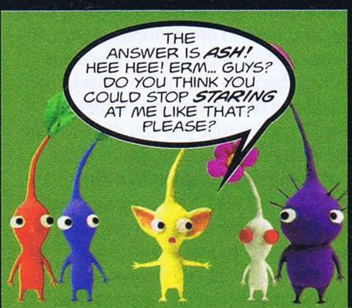
On behalf of the entire NGC team (excluding myself) I would like to hang my head in shame for issue 92's lack of competence. Ed

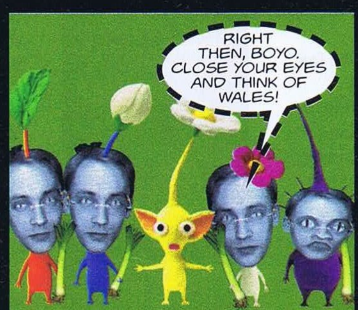
Gavin Smith, Cupar; Joe Lawrence, Grundisburgh; Damian Doyley, Goldthorpe (not Coldthorpe); Daniel Hadley, Colchester; Gordon Allinson, Guildford; Danny Entwistle, Notlob; Michael Fenton, Livingston; Luc Jones, Pembrey; Katie Wright, Loughborough; Alex Catena, Aylesbury; Fraser Smith, Motherwell; Bent Eigil Sumelius, Norway; Danny Rafferty, via email; Daniel Cole, Eastleigh; Glenn Masson, Edenbridge; John Martin, Co. Antrim; Tom Schofield, Brighton; Darren Revell, Plymouth; Allard Altena, Belgium; Ben Salter, via email; Paul Griffiths, Solihull; Robert Mercieca, Malta; Jacob Trotter, Londonderry; Josef Walters, Swansea; Rogan Tonks, Pontefract; Reece Yau, Tamworth; Jack Clarkson, Staines; Jason Sharpe, Buckingham. Cheers!

Grintendo!

SEND US YOUR NINTENDO JOKES! MAKE THEM GOOD AND YOU WIN A GAME. BUT IF MR WHITE FAILS TO SEE THE FUNNY SIDE, THE YELLOW PIKMIN DIES. HORRIBLY. *THIS MONTH:* DIRE 'JOKE' BY MICHAEL AZOPARDI









WRITE TO... GRINTENDO, MAILBOX, NGC, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW OR EMAIL NGC@FUTURENET.CO.UK



'Garden centre'

When I was visiting a garden centre yesterday, I stumbled across something very unexpected. This item, I believe, would be perfect for any gamers who like to tend to their plants as well as their controllers.
DJ Fryer, Seaton

It's beautiful – we'll see if we can get hold of a batch and give them away as free gifts with the next issue. Maybe. Ed

'Could not find'

I have looked everywhere in Burton for a copy of *Harvest Moon: A Wonderful Life* but to my horror I could not find the game on sale for love nor money. I asked my local independent retailer why this was so, and was told that the main retailers get hold of most of the copies, then the independent shops have to battle it out among themselves to get hold of a copy. But absolutely everywhere seems to have sold out straight away. What's happening? Has Ubi Soft sent too few copies to the UK?
James Crisp, Burton Upon Trent

It seems that somebody chronically underestimated the demand for **Harvest Moon.** ***Maybe you should check eBay for second-hand copies. Ed***







SO TELL ME THIS...

Hot answers to burning questions

Could you please tell me whether or not a US or Japanese Wavebird will work on a PAL Gamecube, as I am hoping to buy a platinum Wavebird.
Stu Webster, via email

Yes, it'll work fine.

1. Does the European version of Harvest Moon *have multiple language settings?*
2. Do you get to name your child?
3. If I imported Animal Crossing *from Australia would it work on my memory card and how many blocks would it need?*
Joseph Dunlop, via email

1. No, it's all in English.
2. Yes.
3. You get a free memory card with the game – it uses 58 blocks.

Is there a chance of either Half-Life *or a* Command & Conquer *game ever coming out on Gamecube? Please say yes or I lose my faith in everything good and pure.*
Dominic Egan, Leigh-on-Sea

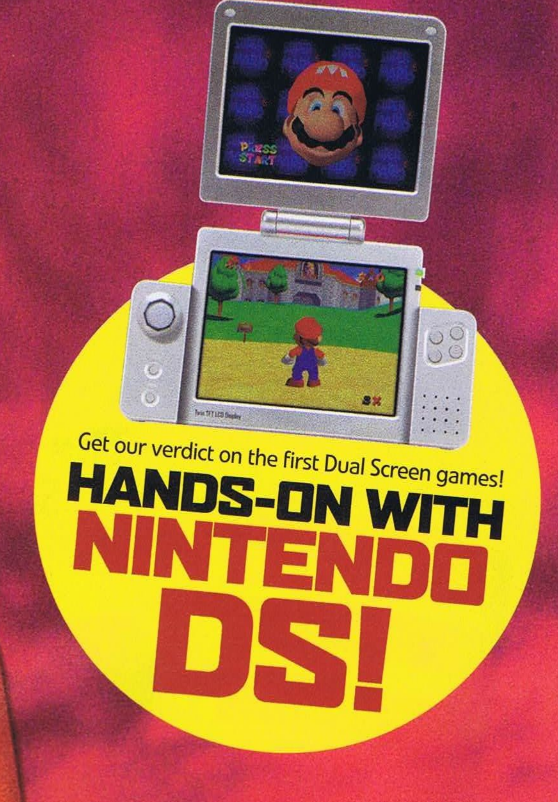
Prepare to lose faith. The answer is no.

Will Hitman 3 *(*Hitman Contracts*) be released on Gamecube?*
Michael Tynan, London

It's unlikely, given that there are no more Eidos games scheduled for Gamecube, but we're told that there's an outside chance of a conversion some time in the future. Just don't hold your breath.

1. Will there be a Golden Sun 3*?*
2. Is there going to be a new Advance Wars*?*
3. Why won't there be a new Mario *game?*
4. Isn't Zelda Four Swords+ *going to be as much of a hassle as FF:CC?*
Gordon Yeung , via email

1. Yes, although nothing has been announced at the (pre-E3) time of writing.
2. A new Advance Wars game is a gimme for Nintendo DS.
3. There will be, but it'll be for the next console rather than Gamecube. At least that's what Nintendo of America told us, but then the E3 show might have just made monkeys of us. Did it?
4. Not at all. Getting a four-player session together requires a bunch of link cables and three GBA-owning mates, but unlike FF:CC you aren't really missing too much if you play the game solo. Trust us, it's genius!



GRAAAGHH!

WWE DAY OF RECKONING

Another NGC World Exclusive. Don't miss our in-depth preview of the biggest Nintendo system wrestler ever!



WIND WAKER 2
First impressions of the major sequel!

PIKMIN 2
Get the essential NGC verdict!

MARIO VS DONKEY KONG
Classic clash on Game Boy Advance! First review? Electric Boogaloo!

SPIDER-MAN 2
Find out how the summer's biggest movie license is shaping up.



The best action from the biggest games show!
Metroid 2, Resi 4, Paper Mario 2, Viewtiful Joe 2, Star Fox 2 – the lot!

Don't settle for second best. Get NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING
On sale: Thurs 17th June

Magazine contents subject to change – but hey, that's life, baby.



MARIO PAINT

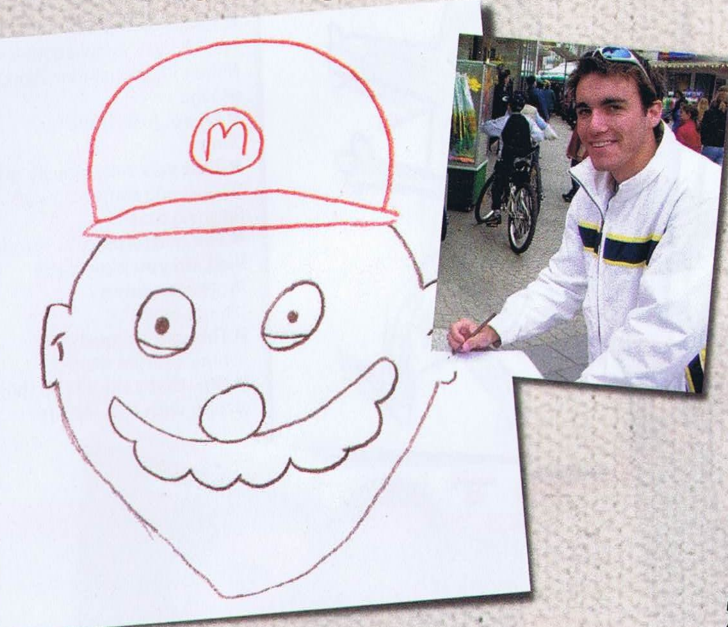
The public draw Nintendo stars from memory.
Sensitive readers should shield their eyes now.

You know Nintendo's superstars better than you know your own mum. By now you must've seen Mario squash the Mushroom Kingdom's entire Goomba population, watched Yoshi squirt out enough eggs to omelette away world hunger, and been forever on the receiving end of Pikachu's never-ending grin.

But could you draw them all from memory? Moustache, sideburns, hat; tongue, tail, egg; pointy yellow ears and spiky tail – easy. Right? We barged into residents of Nintendo Europe's home town and asked them to conjure up images of Nintendo's best-known characters through the medium of paper and coloured pencil. The inhuman monstrosities that sprang from their sieve-like minds are presented here…

MARIO

■ **Better known than Mickey Mouse, 17 gajillion games sold and some of the most distinctive facial hair in showbiz. You wouldn't know it from these inept scrawlings, though.**



ROBERT (17)

Student

■ **Hi, we're from NGC. We'd like you to draw Mario.**
"I'm from Australia."
■ **Don't you have Mario down there?**
"Of course."
■ **Off you go, then.**
"Moustache first."
■ **That's actually pretty good... ah, no, it's all going wrong now.**
"I've drawn Santa Claus, haven't I?"
■ **What happened to his eyes?**
"He's squinting at a small turtle. Can you say I'm ten years old?"
■ **Nice try.**



KATHRIN (15)

At school

■ **Draw a Mario for us.**
"Hehehehe."
■ **Mario? Draw?**
(Draws while still giggling)
■ **Have you played any Mario games?**
"A few. I know his moustache."
■ **Not well enough by the look of it. Interesting skirt, too. Are those knee-length socks he's wearing?**
"I can't remember if his clothes are red or blue."
■ **Why not red *and* blue? No, we were only joking about that... ah, too late.**



JACQUELINE (16)

At school

■ **Do you know Mario?**
"He's probably the only game character I do know!"
■ **Draw him, then.**
"Red and blue clothes, I remember. And he's got a moustache."
■ **Not sure about the orange face, though. Are you sure his eyes are that... googly?**
"Pretty sure. I'm finished."
■ **Er, feet?**
"Oh, yes... there you go."
■ **Muffins for feet. Like it. What about hands?**
"Nah."
Bye then.



ALEX (22)

Shop Assistant

■ **Would you like to draw a Mario?**
"Yeah." (Draws in silence for 15 minutes.)
■ **How are you getting on?**
"Just doing the sideburns."
■ **Er, you've converted Mario into an orthodox Jew.**
(Silence)
■ **Sorry, carry on. What's that on the right?**
"It's that magic sink plunger he's got. I'm just doing the sparkles."
■ **We didn't know he had a...**
(Stares)
...forget it.



YOSHI

■ We were surprised by how many plain old pedestrians had heard of Mario's tongue-happy reptile friend. We were less surprised by how rubbish they all were at drawing him.





VERENA (16), CLARA (16), KATHARINA (16)

At school

■ **Hi, we're NGC. Can you draw Yoshi?**
"Definitely"
■ **Do it!**
"This is pretty hard. Oh, wait, I remember he licks big eggs."
■ **Possibly in some alternate universe. You've got the tongue right.**
"I haven't put the curly bit on the end yet – there."
■ **Oh.**
"Feet? Absolutely no idea. And a little tail."
■ **You've given him spots – is he ill?**
"Doesn't he have spots normally?"
■ **Goodbye!**

SIMON (24)

Exporter

■ **Heard of Yoshi?**
"Yes! Do you know about a Nintendo tournament taking place around here?"
■ **Er, no. Just draw.**
"Done."
■ **That was suspiciously quick.**
"I'll just add some colour as a finishing touch."
■ **The masterpiece is complete. Well, do you play many Nintendo games?**
"Er, not really."
■ **Thought as much.**
"Oh no, I forgot the tail."
■ **Yep, that's the single thing wrong with this picture.**







CARMEN (20)

Student

"You want me to draw Yoshi?"
■ **It's easy.**
"Does he have ears? Oh, my brother plays Yoshi games a lot, I've got no idea."
■ **The raccoon tail is plainly wrong. You might want to give him an arm or two.**
"Really? OK… I think he's only got three fingers."
■ **Fingers? We thought he was holding a tree there.**
"There's something missing."
■ **Spikes?**
"Oh, his big red mouth!"
■ **Of course.**

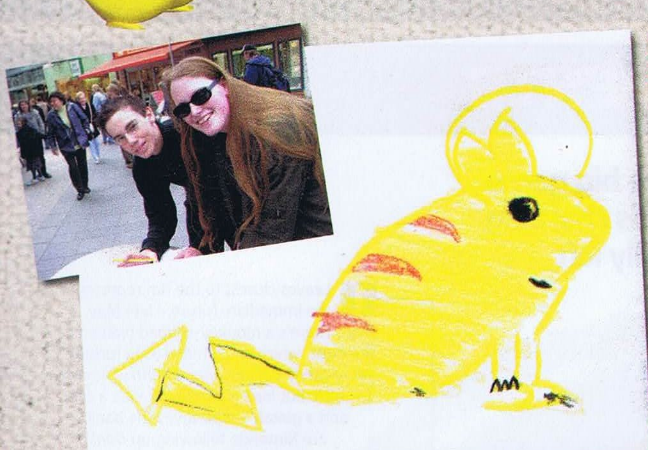
DANIEL (21)

Student

■ **Reckon you can draw Yoshi?**
"Definitely – I know him very well. I play Game Boy a lot. This'll be easy!"
■ **Good start there. Are those worrying stumps supposed to be his legs?**
"Actually, I can't remember the mouth."
■ **You've given him lipstick.**
"Does he have white spots?"
■ **Not again. Put it this way – spots won't spoil your picture.**
"Finished."
■ **Now we all know what happens if you pour acid on Yoshi.**

PIKACHU

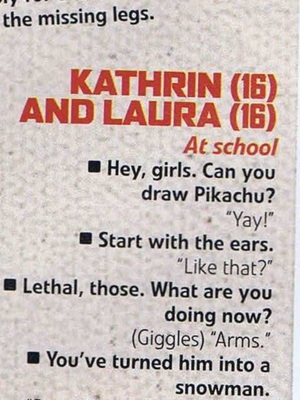
■ Since the Pokémon invasion, you'd think even dazed grannies and pet dogs could easily recall the spiky tail and rosy cheeks of Pika-Pika-Pikachu. You'd think wrong.



HANNAH (22) AND SIMEON (18)

At school

■ Hello, we're from NGC. Think you can draw Pikachu?
"We'll give it a go. Yellow, spiky tail, right?"
■ Bingo.
"I've messed it up already."
■ You've given him some kind of space helmet. And the tail of Satan.
"I'm not sure his mouth is right, either."
■ It's more of a cheeky grin than a sinister half-smile.
"Hmm – I think I'm finished."
■ Probably for the best. We won't dwell on the missing legs.



KATHRIN (16) AND LAURA (16)

At school

■ Hey, girls. Can you draw Pikachu?
"Yay!"
■ Start with the ears.
"Like that?"
■ Lethal, those. What are you doing now?
(Giggles) "Arms."
■ You've turned him into a snowman.
"Does Pikachu have a nose?"
■ Can't help you. But we can tell you that he definitely doesn't have four red eyes like something out of The Matrix.
"He's got a big smile, though, right?"
■ He has now.



THORSTEN (19)

Car mechanic (left)

■ Hi – give Pikachu a go.
"I can't remember his body."
■ Just do the face.
(He draws and colours for around 10 minutes).
■ We've got to go the toilet soon.
"I've got to do his nose. Does it look like this?"
■ About ten times too big. Otherwise, perfect.
"Mouth, mouth, mouth. Hmm…"
■ If in doubt, just draw a stupid happy smile.
"All right."
■ Actually, it's probably best to ignore our advice.
"Cheers."



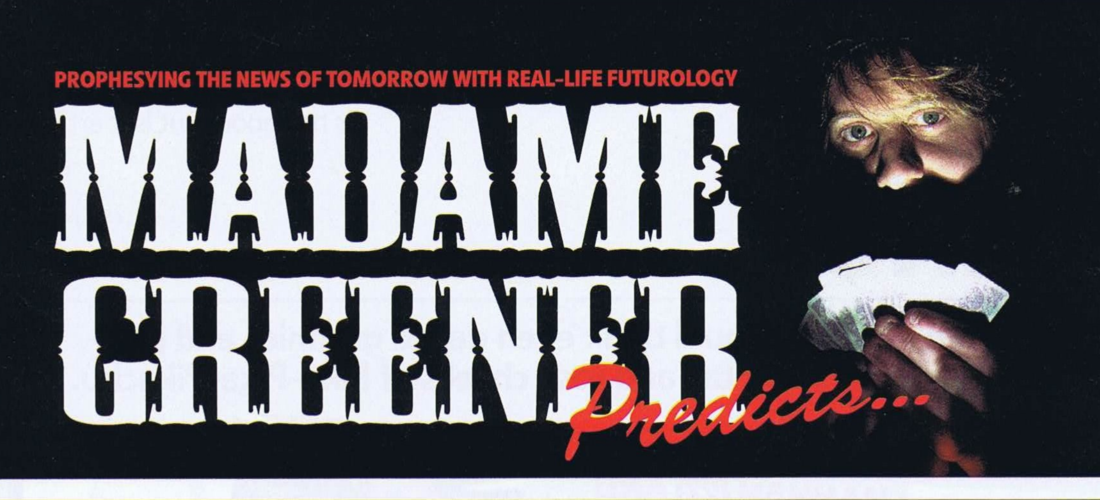
KERSTIN (24)

Secretary

■ Draw us a Pikachu.
"Oh, cool, I drew him a year ago."
■ We won't press further.
"Oh, that's wrong – he's not that fat, is he?"
■ Actually, just about. Pika's a chubby little man.
"I'll give him a tuft of hair there. Has he got clothes?"
■ Nope – totally naked.
"I can't get his foot right."
■ We'll just pretend that he's got foot rot…
"Now for the mouth…"
■ Argh! We'll have those pencils back now, thanks.



PROPHESYING THE NEWS OF TOMORROW WITH REAL-LIFE FUTUROLOGY



Looking into the future through crossed eyes...

THIS MONTH: POST-E3 ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ After May's star-spangled E3 show has mopped up all the big game unveilings, leaving a crowd of burger-bellied US website kids chanting "Awesome! Awesome! Awesome!" in its wake, June is usually left barren of newly-announced products. *Or is it..?* Tasseography tells all.

1 Leaves closest to the rim represent the immediate future – late May, then. There's a monkey-shaped blob on the right, which could mean (God forbid) yet another *Donkey Kong Country* remake for GBA. But look underneath – it's a cat and a guitar. Shigsy loves the banjo... are Nintendo following up *Donkey Konga* with a string-plucking rhythm action game starring Meowth? The tea doesn't lie.

2 See that duck at the top? Squint a bit. There. Ducks mean that "money is coming" according to the Tasseography Bible – and it's squatting behind a monster rabbit. Ducks, rabbits, money... bow your heads in shame, Warner Bros, for in June you shall announce yet another bin-destined *Looney Tunes* licensed platformer.

3 We travel further into the future (early June) courtesy of the leaves stuck halfway down the cup. And look – it's a little boat, toot-toot! This means "protection". And is that a tree (meaning "improvement") it's sailing towards? We know what this is: a slew of third-party Nintendo DS carry bags. Thanks, tea.

4 Some sort of lizard, sticking its tongue out, and three dots (flies?) underneath. Barring the unexpected return of *Chameleon Twist*, this probably represents first shots of TDK's *Scaler: The Shape Shifting Chameleon*. Told you it'd be a quiet month.

5 A beautiful hawk soars to the west – and this means "jealousy". But jealousy of what? The submarine just beneath suggests we'll make PS2 and Xbox owners envious with this generation's first genuine sub-'em-up! Sigh.

6 Into the middle, and late June. The reading is difficult here, loves, given the unholy mess of tea and leaf that's settled. Is that the rotor blade of an aircraft carrier at the top-right? A burned corpse bottom-left? Everything's sort of 'linked up', so perhaps Nintendo will announce plans to launch the GBA wireless adaptor in Europe? We're really struggling here.

AND THE PREDICTIONS...

- Early rumours that after *Donkey Konga*, Nintendo are planning a *Pokémon* banjo-'em-up
- Bugs Bunny and Daffy Duck return to soil the planet with more half-hearted platform rubbishment.
- Snazzy plastic carry pouch for your Nintendo DS unveiled by Imagination Free Accessories.
- First shots of TDK's *Scaler: The Shape Shifting Chameleon* rock your world.
- A submarine simulator – or some other kind of watery game – announced exclusively for GC.

Madame Greener's ridiculous ideas will be checked by an independent adjudicator in NGC/96.

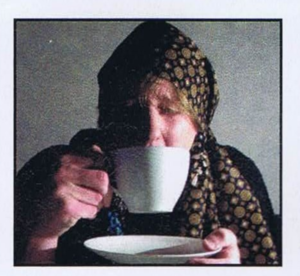
THE METHOD
READING TEA LEAVES



1. Acquire mysterious labelless bag of tea from ancient sage (two quid from the Asian supermarket down the road).



2. In accurate reconstruction of timeless oriental ceremony, boil kettle and pour it onto tea at bottom of white Ikea mug.



3. Drink. Gag. Consider adding milk and sugar, but consider this might mess up the magic or summon a demon. Drink. Gag.



4. Leave small amount of water at bottom, then swirl cup while chanting to the tea gods through leaf-clogged teeth.

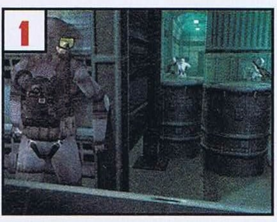


5. Study the pattern of leaves based on a guide we got off the internet. Let that disgusting black residue reveal the future!

TOP 10: AMAZON REVIEWS

Our pick of the best verdicts from Amazon.co.uk…

1



METAL GEAR SOLID: THE TWIN SNAKES

"Best ever storyline in a game. Five stars. I shouldn't be giving it five stars because I've never played the game before. By it because you might love the story line (some peple might think it's boring)."

2



METROID PRIME

"You're just a person in a massive and rediculus-looking robot costume with a laser beam that is used for opening doors and killing aliens. Lame or what? And you travel around the different planets killing things. COME ON NINTENDO!"

3



SOUL CALIBUR 2

"Ok, most 'hard cor'gamers know graphic' don't count when it comes to what a game should recive in star value. But this time, not only was it great BUT the graphic' make you wanna buy it, let alone play it!"

4



TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA

"Maybe I'm missing something here – but I'm sure that one shot to the foot or balls would stop most people running away. Usually I get frustrated and run them over with an ice-cream van."

5



SUPER MONKEY BALL 2

"There is this 1 level that is impossible to get past!! Honestly i have tried to get past this level for hours and hours! i was honestly considering taking it back. I know i sound a bit mad but i dont have alot of patience with these games."

6



MARIO KART: DOUBLE DASH!!

"SATURDAY NIGHTS ALWAYS BEGIN, DRINKING AND PLAYING *MK 64* (PLAYIN HALF CUT IS DEFINALTY THE BEST WAY TO PLAY). THIS PASSED SATURDAY THE SCREAMIN WAS LOUDER!"

7



PIKMIN

"In groups [the Pikmin] are brave, but as individuals they are heroic – feisty, loyal, unselfish, daring. My last tiny blue Pikmin was with me for three days before succumbing to a horrible slug. I actually wept. We'd been through all sorts together."

8



MARIO PARTY 5

"Best game out? I can't wait till xmas, so i have to play it at woolworths till then! CMON XMAS!"

9



EXTREME G3

"If you like the idea of trying to 'control' your motion sickness then 'this' is the game for you!!! They picked the right name for it … it 'is' Extreme ! I say again… IT ROCKS HARDCORE !!!"

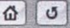
10



THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: WIND WAKER

"I say i say i say, whats all this then. A game i say a game. Its a top notch game with top notch sausage graphics. its about a pig boss who wants to kill the world. i would buy it, would you."






http://www.internetcorrespondent.co.uk

YOUR INTERNET CORRESPONDENT

The best of the 'net several weeks after it happens.

• Hot on the heels of last month's Pokémon statistical analysis comes Soul Calimeter, a Gamecube plugged into a PC that scans Soul Calibur 2 in play and counts moves, hits, wins – and even provides a robotic commentary. How does it work? "The VFW implementation proved too unreliable, so a JMF wrapper was written around Microsoft's DirectShow APIs". Quite.
> homepage.mac.com/mschrag/SoulCalimeter/
>

• More fake Nintendo DS photoshoppery from readers of gadget site Gizmodo – including several cheeky beggars who sent in NGC's own silvery dual-screened mockup. The curvy PDA-style one isn't half bad, although about as likely as a portable console shaped like Yamauchi's head. Or, indeed, a living person's head shaped like Yamauchi's head.
> www.gizmodo.com
>

• Ubernews organisation CNN says: surgeons who play videogames make 37% fewer mistakes. Doctors like James "Butch" Rosser (yes, really – "Butch") find similarities between playing Super Monkey Ball 2 and "sewing two pieces of intestine together". Now, doctors are actually playing videogames to warm up before surgery. Let's hope it's not Ikaruga or they'll be storming red-faced into the operating theatre and flinging your liver at the wall.
> www.cnn.com
>

• And talking of surgery: here's a Game Boy Advance SP gored open to reveal its shining innards. We wept at the sight of those orphaned Start and Select buttons staring forlornly into the camera.
> www.anildash.com/photos/gameboyguts/
>

• And lastly, the 'net is abuzz with a video of a hairy Japanese dude doing the Super Mario Bros theme on guitar – including coin ta-rings and mushroom blurp-blurp-blurps. Axe magic!
> www.google.com/search?q=mario+guitar
>

//got a link?//
Got a Nintendo-related link for Your Internet Correspondent? Email it to ngcyic@hotmail.com

BEHIND THE BURN

Ever wondered how a game gets made and where the ideas come from? Over the coming months we're going to look at how some classic Gamecube titles were developed.

Criterion Software's Alex Ward reveals the secrets behind the crashiest thing on four wheels.

THE MAKING OF... BURNOUT 2



ALEX WARD

Director of Design at Criterion Software and one of the driving forces (ahem!) behind Burnout *and* Burnout 2*.*



During a drive home one summer night in 2003, Criterion Software's Director of Design, Alex Ward, was pulled over by police. After the old "Are you aware how fast you were driving, sir?" routine, the officers asked Alex what he did for a living. Sheepishly, the *Burnout* mastermind confessed to designing games where players score points for driving like hooligans – often while at the wheel of a police car.

"Not *Burnout 2* by any chance?" remarked the older of the two policemen. "We've got it on Gamecube. Very popular back at the station, that one. But those crashes – too over-the-top, cars flying through the air and all that. If you'd been at the scene of a road accident, you'd know it's not all fun and games, son."

And with that, the policeman let Alex off with a caution: "Sort those crashes out."

Someone should have told him that those smash-ups are the *point* of *Burnout 2: Point of Impact*.

Sportsters somersaulting over colliding tankers to plunge bonnet-first into cars already crushed by buses forcefully inserted into their behinds. Fountains of windscreen shards and fizzing chunks of car door. Gut-turning crunches followed by the never-ending wail of broken horns. All brought to centre stage by *Burnout 2's* most memorable and popular addition: the Crash mode.

"Crash mode was originally planned as an unlockable variant

BURNOUT 2

How Criterion made it faster and more furious…

SPEED

Oh, the speed. That speedometer pointer nervously creeps past 150mph on straights – such a heart-hammering experience that it's not uncommon to find Burnout 2 *players sitting in front of the TV, dead.*

TRAFFIC

Changing lanes just as you're about to roar past, emerging from crossroad junctions to thump straight into your passenger door, and filling up tunnels in a way that will have you pleading, "Out of the waaay*!" in a strangled voice.*

TRACKS

Influenced by the courses in classic arcade racers like Daytona USA *and* Ridge Racer, Burnout 2*'s airports, beaches, alpine paths and forest dirt-tracks were crafted to perfection by the talented designers at Criterion.*

CRASHES

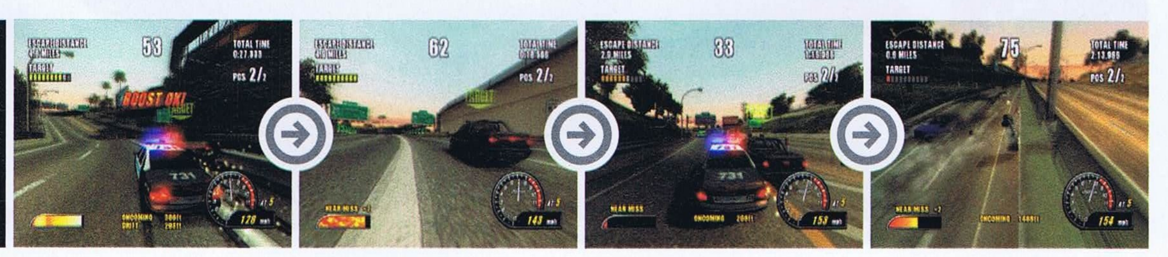
After a collision, the camera flips to show the crunching pile-ups through a spectator's or bird's eyes. Burnout 2*'s crashes are more gratifyingly 'Hollywood' than* Burnout 1*'s – and there's a special Crash mode dedicated to their eye-wincing chaos.*

BURNOUT

Dodging oncoming traffic, just missing a collision or leaping through the air fills a boost bar up. When it hits the top, the shoulder button warps the screen, intensifies the music and ramps up the velocity.

PURSUIT MODE

According to Alex, many* Burnout 1 *fans pretended the two-player mode was a cop-and-robber chase, hence* Burnout 2*'s* Pursuit *mode, complete with dying siren when the pursuer crashed.



on the main game for people who enjoyed watching fenders bend in *Burnout 1*," says Alex. "But it soon evolved into a full-fledged minigame, because we didn't want to restrict it to people who'd completed so-and-so percent of the game. If you didn't fancy racing, or reading the manual, you could just drive a car really fast down a hill and see what happened."

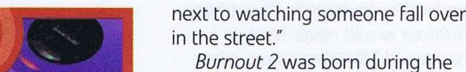
And local law enforcement aside, Crash mode is most people's fondest memory of *Burnout 2*.

"We were overwhelmed by the reaction," remembers Alex. "Especially because we were a bit worried about it during development. Female gamers, and people who normally don't play racing games, absolutely loved it. It's the funniest thing in the world next to watching someone fall over in the street."

Burnout 2 was born during the holiday Criterion took after completing work on the first game. Members of the engineering team went to see car-crammed movie The Fast and The Furious – which is like *Burnout* times ten, with screaming speed, rollicking street races and catastrophic crashes. When it was over, they stepped out of the cinema all sharing the same thought. "We've got to make that into a game."

"Other than that," Alex remembers, "there were no firm ideas except: let's do another one and see what happens."

Although work didn't start on the Gamecube version until later – it was completed in only four months by a core programming team of just two – Alex was aware Criterion would be expected to drive the system's racing reputation forward with *Burnout 2*. "I mean, what was our competition, *Mario Kart*?" he laughs. "We had to



"PEOPLE WHO DON'T NORMALLY PLAY RACING GAMES LOVED CRASH MODE"

BLOW UP

Criterion hold the rare honour of blowing up one of the first Gamecubes in existence. "We took delivery of an early US machine," recalls Alex. "One of our guys plugged in a UK power supply in his haste to see it up and running, and it caught fire. Now we won't let him plug in so much as a lamp."

TURN OVER

To discover Alex's favourite set up for *Burnout 2* – plus the team's worries about Crash mode.

THE SEGA FACTOR

The influence of arcade racing masters Sega runs right throughout *Burnout 2*...

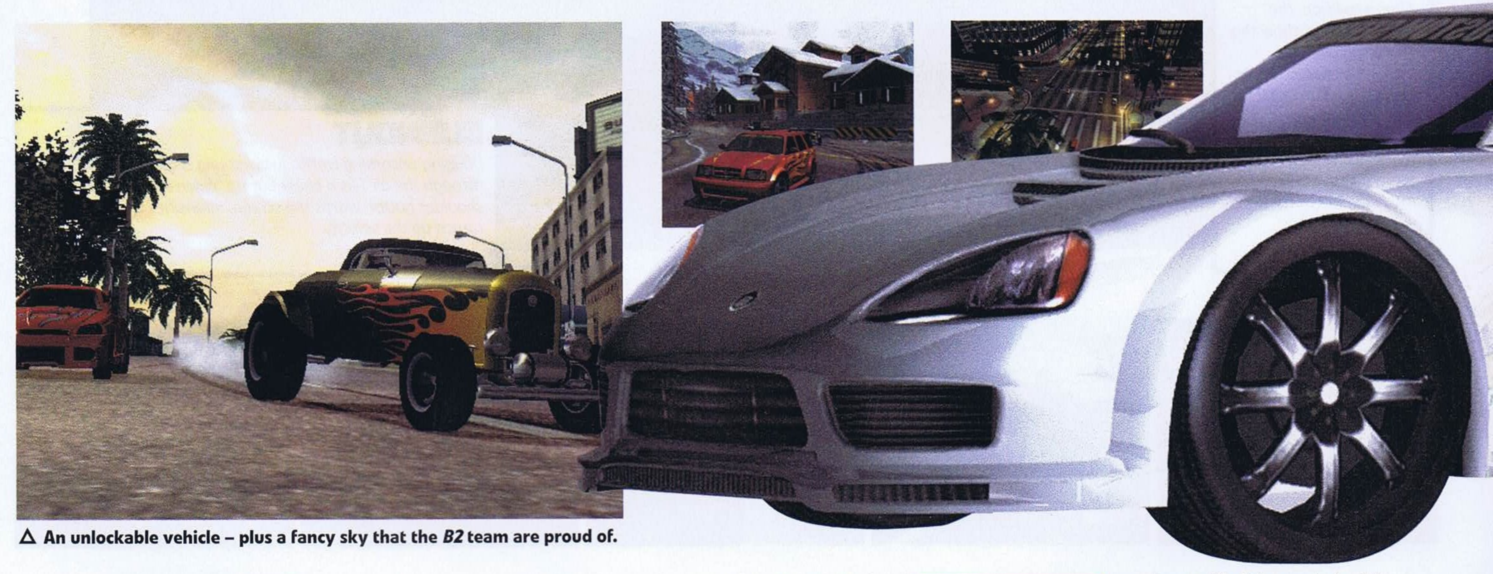


The seminal racer *Out Run* – which perfected the concept of nipping in and out of 3D traffic – is *Burnout 2's* most obvious forefather.

Criterion played with using a Roman numeral before settling on a fiery '2' for the logo – inspired directly by Sega's logo for *Daytona USA 2*.

The look of the Supercar – *Burnout 2's* meatiest racer – was an homage to the one in Sega's *SCUD Race*, right down to the yellow-and-blue colour

The airport track is another *SCUD Race* descendant. Sega's was in their title because their offices are across the road from Narita airport.



An unlockable vehicle – plus a fancy sky that the *B2* team are proud of.

create the best racing game on Gamecube, with no-one to compete against except ourselves. It was going to be tough."

With dev kits and expertise available through Acclaim, the tiny GC team pushed that purple box hard to create the ultimate arcade racer. *Burnout 2* arrived with a slick frame rate, astonishing speed, realistically shimmery car torsos, steering wheel support, and properly distorted engine noises that "almost set the sound chip on fire" according to Alex.

PURSUIT MODE

Much of what influenced the game is clear. Alex once met Yu Suzuki, the man behind classic Sega racer *Out Run*, and thanked him personally, because "without him, *Burnout* would never have happened." But there were other, less obvious influences.

"The desert track was going to be Las Vegas," reveals Alex. "But I went to play pinball at the house of one of the Acclaim guys in Arizona. We took tons of pictures, and the result is that everything you see in the desert – including all the cacti – are from that weekend."

EA's in-your-face snowboarder *SSX Tricky* is one of *Burnout 2's* less obvious muses. Why? Accessibility.

"We watched people play the original *SSX* who clearly didn't know about the boost system," says Alex. "*Tricky* made everything obvious – using flashing lights, sound effects, and a blast of Run DMC to let you know you'd earned a boost. We felt people hadn't worked out *Burnout's* boost system, either, so in came the fiery boost bar, the 'Boost Activated!' message, the music ramping up.

"We wanted people to understand the experience. No-one goes to see 'Rocky' and comes out not knowing it was about boxing."

As a result, earning a squirt of speed was easier in *Burnout 2*, allowing experts to rack up boosts and career around at max speed. How did it feel when the hardcore *Burnout* crowd cried "too easy"?

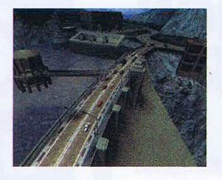
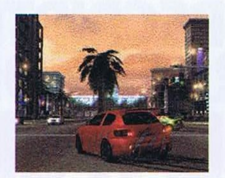
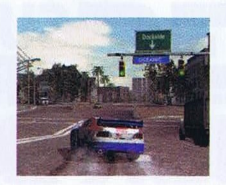
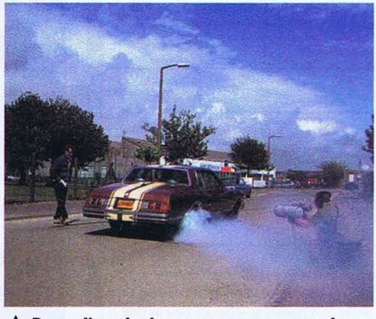
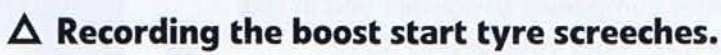
"The majority of people think *Burnout 1* is the hardest game ever," says Alex. "Can you do the USA Marathon in reverse on Survival mode, a 24-minute race without crashing? We had to video ourselves doing just that to show Nintendo



A DISC

Alex still has a pre-product Gamecube version of Burnout 2 in his drawer. "This was a really tasty playable version," Alex recalls of the disc labelled 'Burnout 2, 21/2/03'. We thought we'd show you a picture. That's it.

How Criterion made it faster and more furious…


▲ It's possible to miss the traffic entirely in later Crash mode junctions.

▲ Recording the boost start tyre screeches.

▲ One of the inspirational Arizona photos.

CRASH TEST

Crash mode asked you to "crash for cash" – rack up millions of dollars in insurance bills by triggering a catastrophic pile-up. Gamers still dedicate themselves to creating the ultimate metal-cruncher.





the game was completable – we were sweating, let me tell you. To your average player, *Burnout* became like a private members' club. *Burnout 2* is easier, it's faster, and it sold that much better."

FREE RUN

Without the fixed routes of real-life tracks or the pernickity handling of licensed cars to burden them, Criterion were free to tinker until *Burnout 2's* controls and easily-memorised tracks were perfect.

"We owned *Burnout*," says Alex. "We made the changes. We could put in as many cars as possible – you won't get to drive a pink Cadillac in *Gran Turismo*.

"We could do what we liked with the manual – there's no mention of how to do a boost start, because we want you to work it out. If we didn't like one of the corners, we changed it. You don't need a real San Francisco or a licensed Lotus to make a big game."

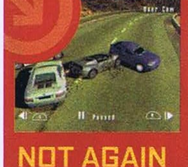
For Alex, the Silver Award given to *Burnout 2* by revered Jap games mag Famitsu (for a score of 30 out of 40) is proof that the game's arcade philosophy was right.

"Some people hammered us for making an arcade game. Take the timer out, they said, you only need that if you're putting coins in. But *Burnout 2* has pure roots. It's like alpine mineral water – pure, unpretentious and perfectly formed."

Now the bad news. "We are not currently developing for Nintendo Gamecube hardware," says Alex. "And *Burnout* is our property and our trademark, so no-one else is making *Burnout 3* for GC either."

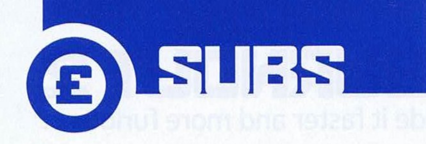
But it's easy to console yourself by sticking *Burnout 2* into your Gamecube. "It's running on my TV right now," says Alex. "We're always going back to play it. Most people will. We're well, well happy with it."

> **"YOU DON'T NEED A REAL SAN FRANCISCO OR A LICENSED LOTUS TO MAKE A BIG GAME"**



NOT AGAIN

Why was the option to save replays missing from Burnout 2*? Because nobody used it in* Burnout 1*. Criterion hoped gamers would send memory cards to mags and enjoy crash competitions. But they didn't. Alex believes this is because the original* Burnout *crashes were "rubbish".*



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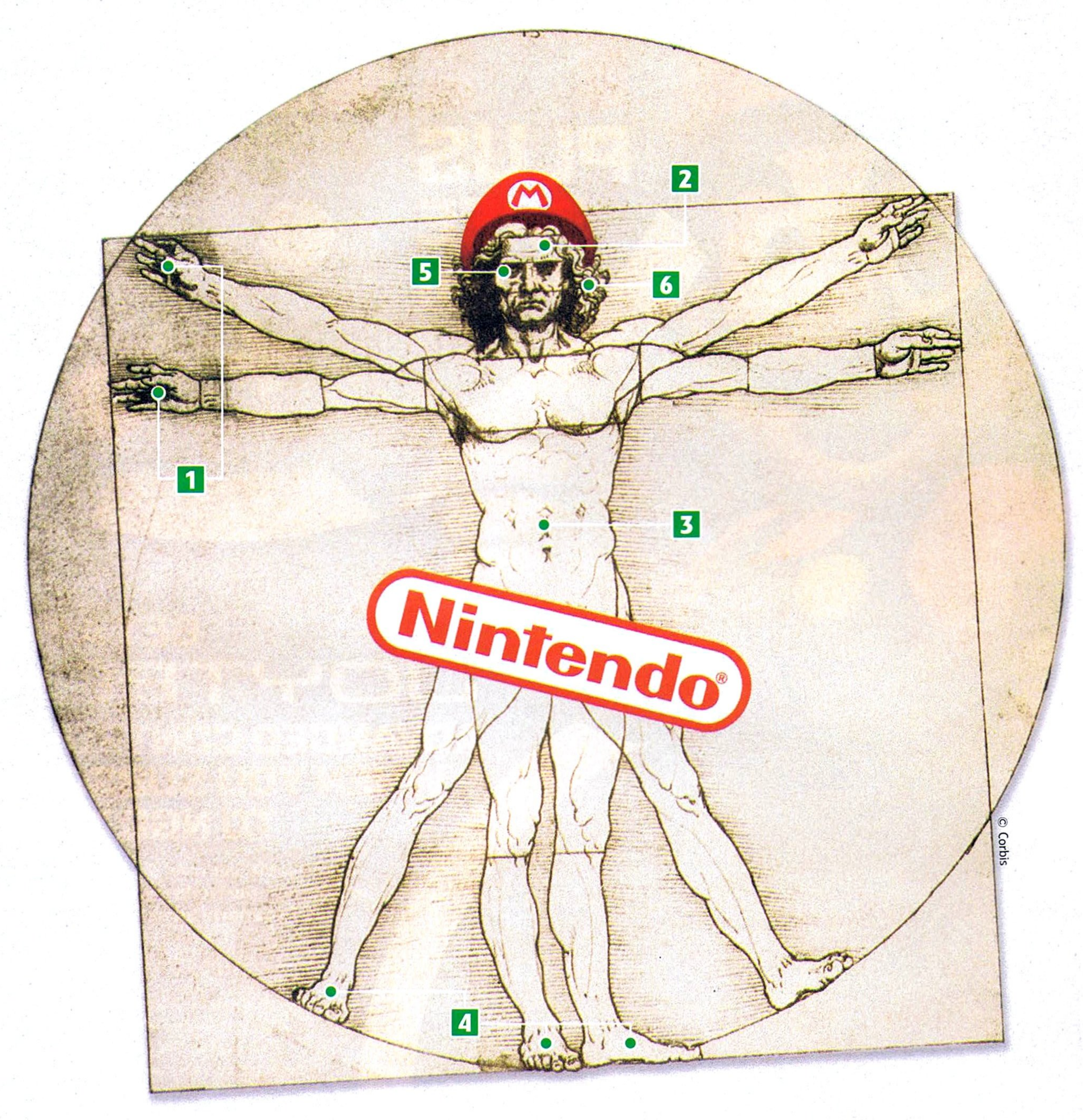
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NINTENDO DS

TOP SECRET CUSTOMER PROFILE

"There might only be 10 or 15 people applauding during the unveiling at E3" *Satoru Iwata*

"There might only be 10 or 15 people who leave the E3 unveiling with the same number of body parts as they had when they arrived" *Hiroshi Yamauchi**



DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

1. **HANDS:** The more, the merrier. Official Nintendo limb grafts will be available via the Stars Catalogue.
2. **BRAIN:** Backwards compatible, allowing for continued enjoyment of old-style mono-screen games.
3. **BODY:** Engineered to minimise muscle cramps/carpal tunnel syndrome due to extended playing sessions.
4. **FEET:** A spare pair is highly recommended, for when the originals wither away due to lack of use.
5. **EYES:** Able to focus independently for simultaneous dual-screen fun. You know – like a chameleon.
6. **HAIR:** Yes.

*Okay, we admit it, he didn't really say that. Please don't hurt us, Yamauchi-san...





FEEL THE SPEED!

Strap yourself into F-Zero: GP Legend and rocket through this adrenaline rush of futuristic racing at more than silly km/h. Use high speed and trickery to dump on the opposition. Are you ready to let fly?

OUT 4th JUNE

F-ZERO: GP LEGEND

Only for Game Boy Advance.



GAME BOY ADVANCE SP

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